



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### **Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### **About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

SA 7619.91

JUN 3 1901



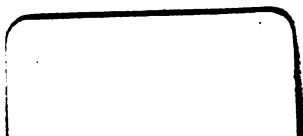
**Harvard College Library**

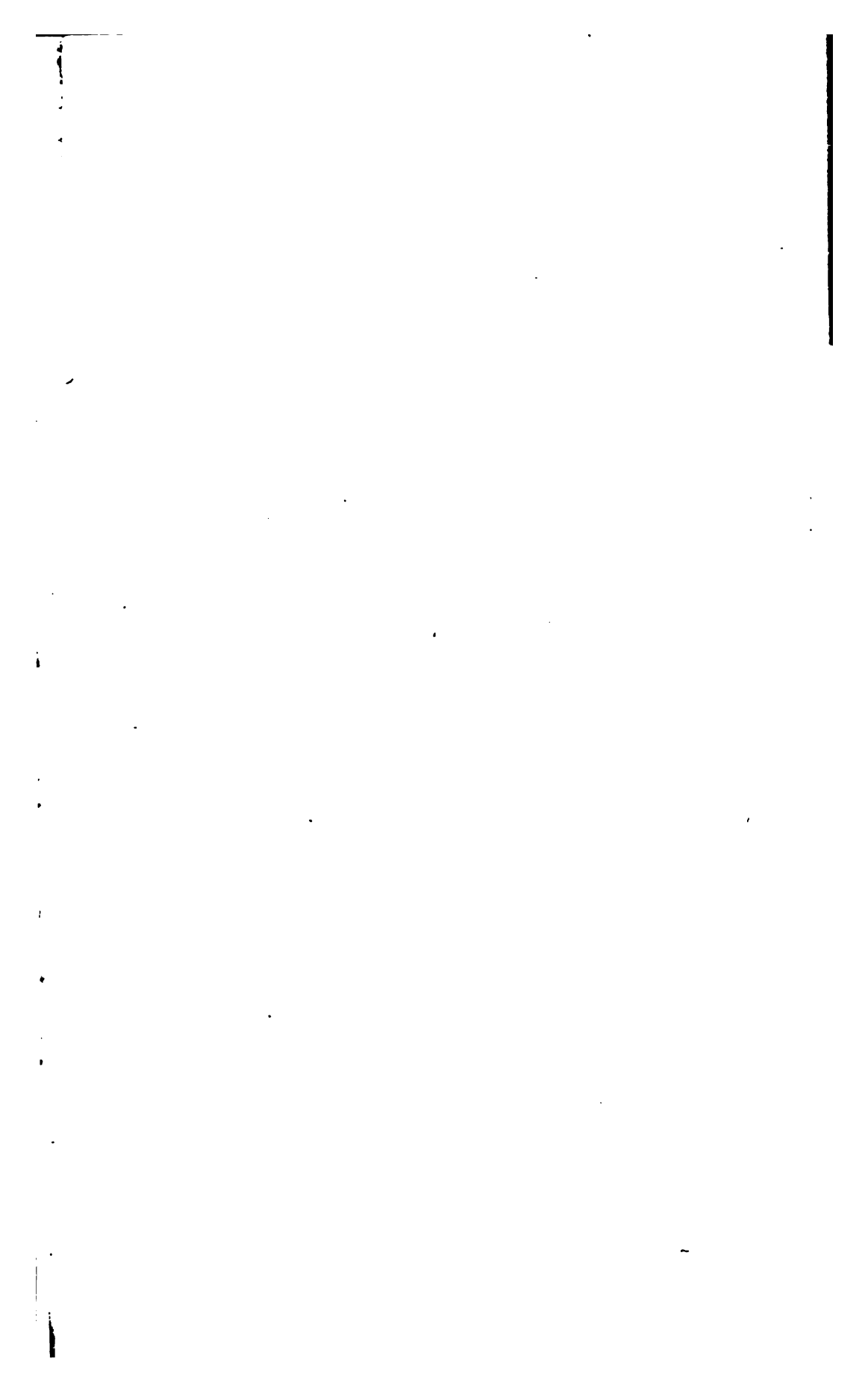
FROM THE

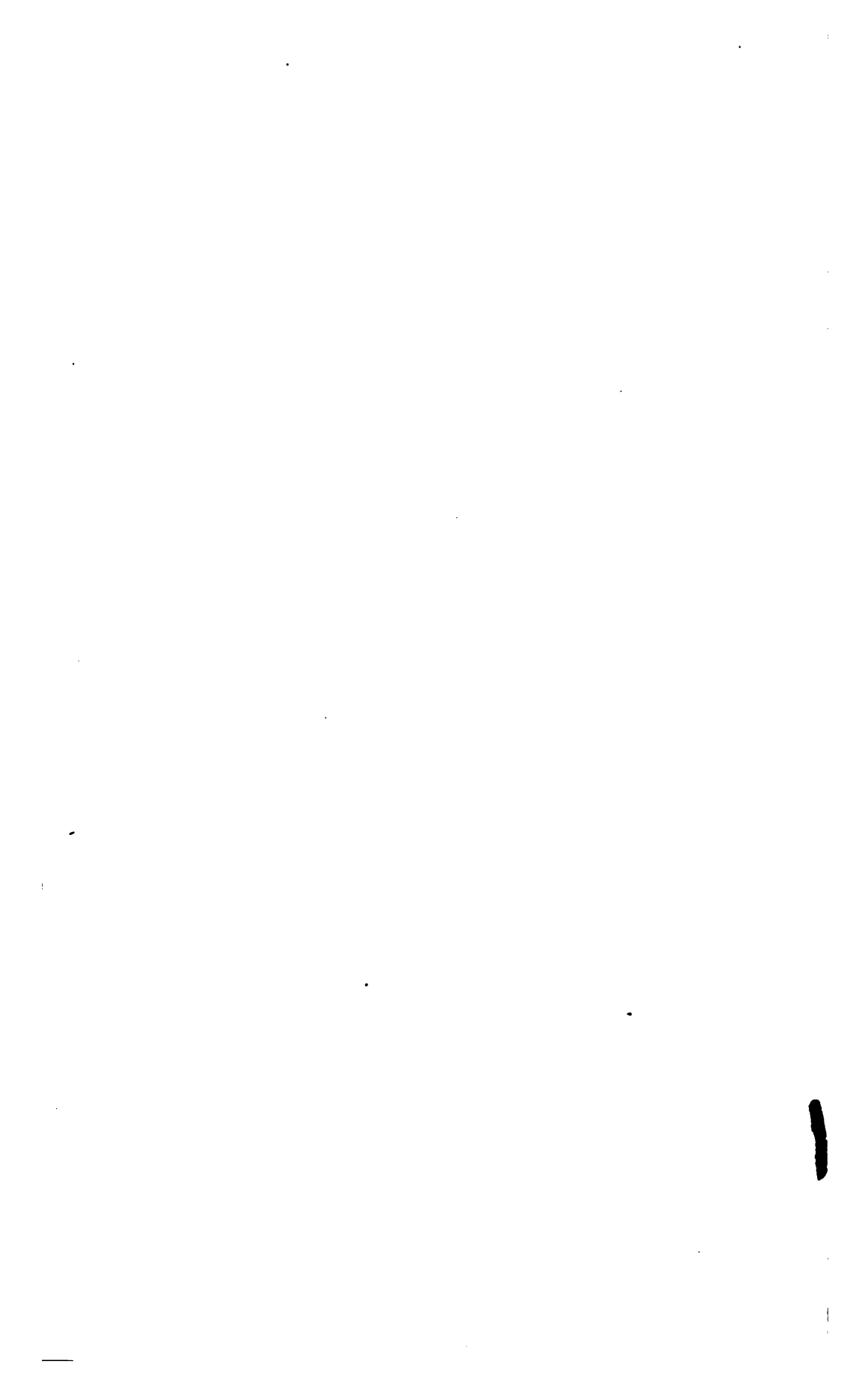
**J. HUNTINGTON WOLCOTT FUND**

Established by ROGER WOLCOTT (H. U. 1870), in memory of his father, for "the purchase of books of permanent value, the preference to be given to works of History, Political Economy, and Sociology." (Letter of Roger Wolcott, June 1, 1891.)

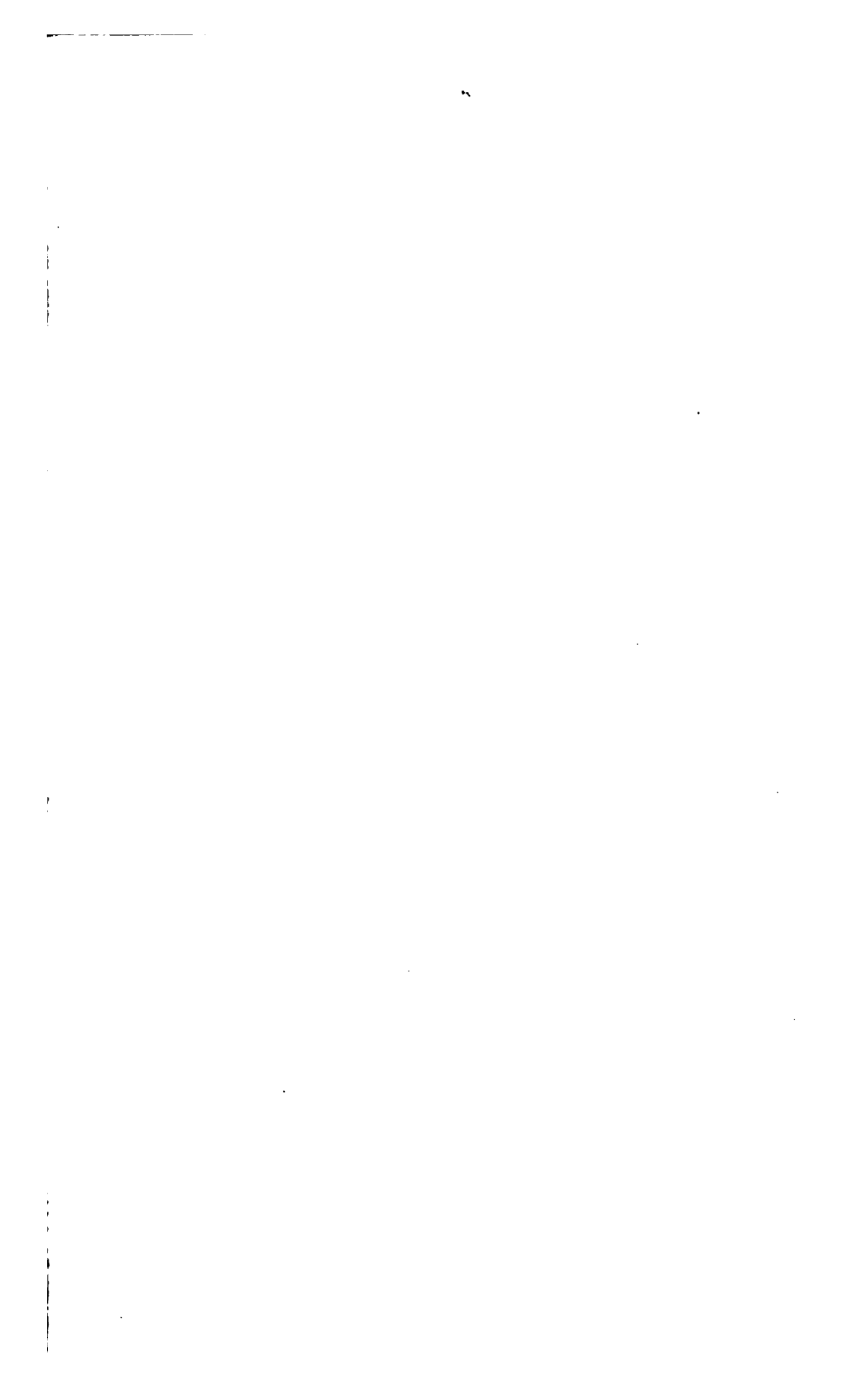
Received 2 May, 1893













**HISTORY**  
**OF**  
**BRITISH GUIANA,**

**FROM THE YEAR 1782 TO THE PRESENT TIME:**

**BY**

**JAMES RODWAY, F.L.S.**

**VOLUME II.**

**1782—1833.**

---

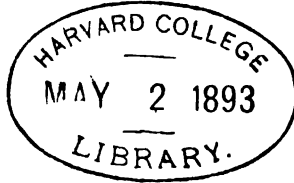
**GEORGETOWN, DEMERARA:**

**J. THOMSON.**

**1893.**

23, 4

SA 7618.91



*Violatoffunds*  
(II)

## Contents of the Second Volume.

	PAGE.
<b>CHAPTER XIV.</b>	
Under French Rule, 1782-1783 ... ..	1
<b>CHAPTER XV.</b>	
Downfall of the Company, 1783-1791 ... ..	23
<b>CHAPTER XVI.</b>	
The "Two Rivers" under State Control, 1792-1796 ... ..	60
<b>CHAPTER XVII.</b>	
Slow Progress of Berbice, 1781-1796 ... ..	83
<b>CHAPTER XVIII.</b>	
The Three Rivers in 1796 ... ..	93
<b>CHAPTER XIX.</b>	
Capture by the British, 1796 ... ..	116
<b>CHAPTER XX.</b>	
Effect of British Influence, 1797-1802 ... ..	141
<b>CHAPTER XXI.</b>	
Cession to Dutch and Recapture, 1802-1804 ... ..	157
<b>CHAPTER XXII.</b>	
Governors Beaujon and Bentinck, 1804-1811 ... ..	176
<b>CHAPTER XXIII.</b>	
Elimination of Dutch Ideas under Carmichael and Murray, 1812- 1822 ... ..	197
<b>CHAPTER XXIV.</b>	
The East Coast Slave Insurrection, 1824 ... ..	222
<b>CHAPTER XXV.</b>	
Berbice under the British, 1796-1831 ... ..	265
<b>CHAPTER XXVI.</b>	
D'Urban and the Orders in Council, 1824-1833 ... ..	279

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



## CHAPTER XIV.

### UNDER FRENCH RULE, 1782—1783.

Admiral Kersaint captures the three rivers—Articles of Capitulation—Proclamation of the French authorities and the Council—Capital projected—Arbitrary rule of the French—Orders and regulations—Want of a currency—Paper money issued—Taxes—The new town—Condition of the three rivers—French Governors—Fort Le Dauphin—Post Office established—Demerara Ferry—Unpopularity of the French—Roman Catholic services by Father Edward—Cruelty to slaves.

**T**HE triumphs of the British arms in 1781 were followed by several disasters during the succeeding year, which, although partially redeemed by Lord RODNEY'S capture of DE GRASSE and most of his fleet, may be considered as an unfortunate one for England. What with the Americans, French, Dutch and Spanish, the British Admiral in the West Indies had his hands too full to be able to properly garrison the settlements in Guiana, and as a natural consequence they were ill-fitted to defend themselves.

In January 1782, the British forces in Demerara consisted of a squadron of small vessels under the command of Captain WILLIAM TAHOURDIN, consisting of the *Oroonoko*, Captain TAHOURDIN; *Barbuda*, Captain FRANCIS PENDER; *Sylph*, Captain LAWRENCE GRÆME; *Stormont*, Captain CHRISTOPHER PAUL; *Rodney*, Captain JOHN DOUGLAS; *Brisbane*, and the *Henry*, Lieutenant ROTHERY. All these were armed with 90 guns and mustered 376 men. Except the

*Stormont*, which was cruising along the East Coast, all the vessels were, at the end of January, anchored near Fort St. George, which was a temporary battery, armed with thirteen 12-pounder guns, situated within thirty yards of the buildings of a plantation (*La Bourgade*).

France, which was then an ally of Holland, on learning of the capture of these colonies by England, fitted out an expedition to regain them, which sailed from Rochefort on the 8th of October 1781, first proceeding with a convoy to Cayenne, where it arrived on the 8th of December. After losing one vessel off Cape Finisterre and another on the Constable Rock, the fleet consisted of *L'Iphigénie*, Comte DE KERSAINT; *L'Amable*, Chev. SUSANNET; *Le Rossignole*, Chev. DE KERSAINT; *Le David*, Mons. DOMBIDAN; *Le Chien Chasse*, Visct. DE LA BEAUMER PLEUVENEL, and *Le Cæsar*, Mons. GIRARD. These were armed with 136 guns, and manned by about 1850 seamen, marines and soldiers,

On the 30th January 1782, Governor KINGSTON received news from Captain PAUL of H. M. Sloop *Stormont*, that he had been chased at the mouth of the Demerara river by a French squadron, and obliged to run his vessel aground to prevent her being captured. A council of war was immediately called on board the *Oroonoko*, to consider what measures of defence could be arranged on such a short notice. There being no lighthouse or other beacon at the mouth of the river, a tall tree which stood out prominently on the west bank had been the recognised landmark; this was at once cut down to prevent the enemy finding the channel. Then, fearing that they might land on the East Coast and come down the road, the dam was cut so as to flood the neighbourhood and render it impassable.

At daybreak next morning the *Stormont* was seen approaching, followed by the French squadron, which consisted of three frigates, a large cutter and four brigs, and by eight o'clock they were drawn up in line across the



mouth of the river. Boats were then sent ashore to effect a landing, but on account of difficulties connected with the swampy nature of the ground these were obliged to return.

As Fort St. George was of no use against such a force, its guns were spiked, and the whole battery broken down. Hearing at eleven o'clock that the French had landed on the East Coast in fourteen boats, and seeing that their squadron was coming in, Captain TAHOURDIN thought it advisable to retreat up the river. This having been agreed to, the fleet went up as far as Lesten's\* Island, (First Island) where TAHOURDIN and KINGSTON thought a stand might be made by erecting a battery, but on inspection they found the place too swampy and otherwise unsuitable for the purpose. It was then considered advisable to go as far as the Sand Hills, where they thought a suitable battery might be erected, which could easily command the whole river.

Meanwhile the Commandeur and Council of Policy had been summoned to surrender the river to Count DE KERSAINT, and letters were sent to Governor KINGSTON, who had remained on board the *Oroonoko*, asking his advice. In answer, he sent proposals for capitulating as far as the colony was concerned, but leaving the men-of-war entirely out of the question. To this KERSAINT answered that he would listen to no terms unless they were proposed jointly by the Governor and the Commander of H. M. squadron, and if there should be any delay on their part, he would proceed at once to burn and destroy the houses and plantations of the English inhabitants.

The English vessels were now anchored opposite the Sand Hills, and a place had been cleared for erecting the battery, but on this demand and threat of KERSAINT, the situation was seriously considered. The force of the enemy

\* So called from the name of the proprietor of Plantation *Land of Cassas* to which the island belonged.

was too great for the English to have any prospect of success in a fight, while the whole colony was now at their mercy. It was proposed to blow up the ships, but as there was no place where a stand might be made, this idea was abandoned. It was therefore decided on the 2nd of March that some arrangement should be come to, and in the afternoon Viscount PLEFVENEL and M. DE FAGAN came up to settle the time for a meeting with KERSAINT.

The meeting took place next day in the house of JOHN HASLIN, at Plantation *Friendship*, when Articles of Capitulation were agreed to as follows, the contracting parties being the Count DE KERSAINT on the one side and Governor KINGSTON, Captain TAHOURDIN, and the Commandeur and Councillors of Demerara on the other:—

1. The inhabitants and others, subjects of His Britannic Majesty, being in the colonies of Demerara and Essequibo, shall have the same privileges as were granted by Lord RODNEY and General VAUGHAN. Answer—Granted.

2. The ships and vessels actually in the rivers, and their cargoes, belonging to the inhabitants, shall be restored to them. Answer—Vessels reported as British merchant ships and their belongings, cannot be given up, but coasters belonging to the inhabitants will be.

3. That a period of six months be allowed to merchants and traders, to arrange their affairs before leaving, and to collect their debts, in accordance with Article XV. of Tobago. Answer—The nature of the affairs and the time required, will be considered.

4. That the same consideration as to time be given to four Civil Officers. Answer—After the Officers of the King shall understand further of these matters they will arrange this.

5. The inhabitants and others in the colony who may wish to remove, with their effects, to the English Islands or to Great Britain, shall be allowed to do so. Answer—They shall be free to depart after complying with the laws, without distinction of place.

6. That certain Civil Officers, belonging to Regiments, but having no troops under their command, be allowed to rejoin their regiments. Answer—Will be considered in conjunction with the Commander of the quadron.

7. The Lieutenant-Governor shall have a safe conduct to Barbados whence he may proceed to England on parole, with his sword, his papers and baggage, these not being inspected or searched, and also be per-

mitted to take his domestics. Answer—Agreed; Mr. KINGSTON has not fixed any time, but will probably be disposed to follow very shortly after Mr. TAHOURDIN.

8. Captain WILLIAM TAHOURDIN demands, that all the Officers be conducted, with baggage and servants, to the British squadron at Barbados, in a Cartel to Lord RODNEY, as soon as possible, and be permitted to go to England on parole to return at once to this colony. Answer—Granted.

9. That it shall be permitted to the Officers to retain their swords, and that the baggage, papers and effects of Officers and Naval Officers shall not be searched. Answer—After the Officers in command of the vessels of His Britannic Majesty shall have delivered their swords, they shall be returned to the Captains and Officers, who shall be considered as prisoners of war; their baggage will not be searched, but provisions and merchandize, if they have any, will be inspected on their embarkation.

10. The Captains and Officers, with their baggage and servants, shall be transported on board the *Oroonoko*, to remain there until such time as Admiral RODNEY may be able to send for them from Barbados. Answer—Granted.

11. That the necessary Cartel ships be manned with Officers, marines and sailors, who have served with Lord RODNEY; these same to be exchanged as soon as possible for a like number of Frenchmen. Answer—Granted, that the Cartel ship shall go and carry the English prisoners to Barbados, but the time is not fixed as the same as that for transporting the Officers, but a little sooner if possible.

12. That a particular ship be allowed to carry the sick and wounded to Barbados, to the fleet of his Britannic Majesty. Answer—Refused.

13. That three months be allowed to the Captains of Merchant vessels to recover the money due to them, and to settle their affairs. Answer—This has already been answered in No. 3.

14. The squadron under my orders (TAHOURDIN'S) in this river, will be given up to the Count DE KERSAINT as follows, viz. two brigantines forming part of the squadron. Answer—Good, provided the vessels be given up in good order.

Done at the house of L'AMITIE (Friendship) on the River Demerara the 3rd of February 1782; all the Articles to be literally interpreted and observed faithfully.

On the 10th, a Proclamation was issued embodying the substance of the above, and informing the inhabitants of the Capitulation. All private persons were to retain their goods, but the Company's plantations were confiscated to the King. As soon as they took the Oath of Allegiance,

they would have all the privileges of French colonists, with liberty to trade with all other nations, except the English, on paying the usual duties. The Dutch flag would have the same privileges as that of France, Spain and the United States, until peace was proclaimed. As in the Capitulation of St. Lucia to the English, the inhabitants were ordered not to pay their debts to France, so here, no one must pay to Great Britain before the peace. The inhabitants were free to make representations direct to the Governor by deputies. The oath was to be taken within twenty-four hours, while any one found treating with the enemy would be considered as such, and punished with confiscation of goods, imprisonment or death, according to circumstances. Political officers were to give over all their papers within three days, explain the manner of collecting taxes, give the expenses of collecting to the newly appointed officers, and account for the King's as well as the Colonial taxes, these to be given on oath, and signed by Mr. SCHUYLENBURG for Demerara, and Mr. TROTZ for Essequibo. Robert KINGSTON would not be allowed to participate in the conditions, until Essequibo was put in possession of KERSAINT, and its capitulation obtained; KINGSTON was also called upon to surrender Berbice. KERSAINT would himself administer the oath at the house of Mr. BOURDA, for which he allowed fourteen days, probably because it was impossible to bring the people from the upper district in less time than this. The ships surrendered by the English, had no goods on board; he presumed these had been hidden, and warned every one to restore them within ten days, or give notice to M. GOUBG the Ordonnateur, in the house on Werk-en-Rust, on pain of a fine of double the value of the goods found in their possession. If they gave notice, the goods might be retained until further orders. Deserters were not to be hidden, but given up to the Commander of the troops within four days. Inland traders were to provide

themselves with licenses, which might be procured from the Ordonnateur. A ship would sail for France in eight or ten days, by which letters might be forwarded to Holland and other countries, and a letter-bag was provided at M. SCHUYLENBURG'S house. M. ALLAISE had been appointed Commander, and would act as Governor in the absence of KERSAINT. The Vendue-Master and Receiver had both been dismissed, and no payments must be made to them, but the King's Taxes would be received by M. GOUBG the Ordonnateur, and the Colonial Taxes by M. TILLY, while M. DESBARATZ had been appointed Vendue-Master. M. SCHUYLENBURG was continued as Commandeur, ANTHONY MEERTENS as Fiscal, and Secretary VAN BAEBLE and the Clerks were also to remain.

All the above matters were the outcome of the negotiations and the first meeting of the Council of Demerara, at which KERSAINT was present. Besides these, the necessity for a town, with proper public buildings and a jail, was considered. The Colony House projected under KINGSTON'S government was in course of erection, but KERSAINT'S ideas were grander than those of his predecessor, as may be seen from the following Proclamation :—

“ We, Comte DE KERSAINT, Commander-in-Chief of the Land and Sea

“ Forces of His Most Christian Majesty in this River, &c., &c.,

“ and

“ the Governor and Councillors of the Colony of Demerary and its

“ dependencies, &c., &c.

“ To all whom it may concern, be it known :—

“ That it is considered necessary, from the great extent of this river and its banks, to have a Capital, which will become the business centre ; where Religion will have a temple, Justice a palace, War its arsenals, Commerce its counting-houses, Industry its factories, and where the inhabitants may enjoy the advantages of social intercourse.

“ This is perhaps the only instance of an European colony, among thousands throughout the world, which has arrived at some magnificence without the establishment of either town or village. But if it is considered under what circumstances and at what cost this state of things has obtained, it will be seen that there is no reason why the colonists of Demerary should

refuse to co-operate to the best of their means in carrying out what we now propose to establish, on the land formerly known as the Brandwagt, which at this moment becomes for them of great importance, if they will promptly enter into commercial relations with France and the French colonies.

“ Herewith we make known to the colonists that those who wish to have lots must make their applications as soon as possible to M. le Comte de KERSAINT and the Ordonnateur M. Gouze, who will take note of their petitions and refer them to M. DESPRETS, the Royal Engineer, by whom the plan will be submitted, the size of each grant fixed, and possession given, on condition of the payment of an annual contribution of five Dutch stivers per square toise (half a square rood).

“ This tax, the aggregate of which is to be specially applied to the maintenance and improvement of the town, is to be paid on delivery of the grant, and yearly in advance. All grants will be forfeited if after six months the holder does not fulfil his engagement of building a house thereon.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Done in our Assembly, at Demerary, 22nd February, 1782.

“ By order of the Court,

“ J. C. VAN BAERLE,  
“ Secretary.”

Having settled matters in Demerara, KERSAINT proceeded to Essequibo and Berbice, which capitulated on similar terms. From the three places the French captured five sloops of war and thirteen large merchant vessels, altogether armed with eighty guns, taking also four hundred prisoners. The English inhabitants were very much put out by this catastrophe, and although the Dutch were not so displeased, most of the settlers felt annoyed at the prospect of again losing their produce. An attempt was made to get up a conspiracy to recover the two rivers for England, but this was put down with a high hand, KERSAINT threatening to hang the ringleaders as being guilty of treason. Although nominally capturing the colonies on behalf of an ally, the French placed officials of their own nationality in all the principal posts, leaving the Directeur-General, Commandeurs and Councillors as mere puppets. As in the case of the English, Essequibo was foremost in

protesting, and on May they objected to give information to the French Receiver, M. DESBARATZ, passing a resolution that, as there was neither Directeur-General nor Council, the titles might just as well be abolished.

The French were very arbitrary in many respects. The prices of certain articles were arranged to be published every six months, and a Publication of February 11th, states that M. GOURG required oxen and sheep for the troops, for which he would pay in cash, or cattle which he daily expected from the Orinoco. The prices fixed at the same time were, for sugar  $2\frac{1}{2}$  stivers, coffee 5 stivers, cotton 14 stivers per lb, rum 18 stivers per gallon, plantains 6 stivers per bunch and yams 10 stivers per basket. On the 21st of March, a Publication was made in Demerara containing quite a miscellaneous collection of orders and regulations. Every Burgher was ordered to supply a list, containing the names and number of members of his family, his plantations, white servants, slaves, fire-arms, quantity of ammunition, number of horses, mules, horned cattle, sheep, goats and pigs; the area of his land, number of acres in cultivation, amount of produce, list of vehicles, amount of last appraisement by sworn valuers, and other information. Persons coming to the Secretary's office were not to go inside the railings without the permission of the Secretary or his representative. The next Council would meet on Plantation *Werk-en-Rust* on the 27th of May following. It was forbidden to any one, but especially to people of colour, to sell rum or other strong liquors to sailors, soldiers or negroes, and also forbidden to keep a tavern of any description. Twice a week, on Sunday and Thursday, the Governor would receive visitors, from 9 a.m. till noon, at his new house at the Brandwagt, where all persons might see him and make their requests. Several persons in the colony calling themselves Medical Doctors, Surgeons, &c., had never shown any diplomas; these were

ordered to do so at once, so that they might be admitted by the Council; those having none, to submit themselves to an examination by a Medical Committee, to be appointed by the Council, otherwise they would be fined £1000. Every slave vessel on her arrival, was to be immediately examined by the Surgeon-Major, in order to find out if there was any infectious disease on board, and if she could be admitted to pratique. Import duties were to be paid on all goods; if by French vessels one per cent, and by neutrals two per cent, ad valorem, while importers might sell their goods by auction or privately as they chose. The Government would, as soon as possible, prevent all monopolies. Owners of slaves who should be condemned to death would be entitled to compensation, but not more than £500 would be allowed for any one slave, the money paid for manumissions being used for this purpose. Printed forms would be distributed from house to house, to ascertain the population, produce, &c., any person failing to fill them up being liable to a fine of £500.

The mention of printed forms seems to show that a press had been imported, but it was not until eight years afterwards that the first colony printed official document was issued; possibly these forms may have been procured from Martinique, and have been perhaps those commonly used in the French colonies.

The necessity for a currency was much felt. While under the Company, the assignats or drafts for salaries, &c., were commonly used, but these were obviously wanting now, and, as money was necessary, it was decided to issue £150,000 in paper money. These and other official documents were to be stamped with the monogram L.XVI. and either D. or E. underneath according as they were issued in Demerara or Essequibo. The year before, G. R. had replaced the G. W. C. of the Company. The exchange value of certain coins was also regulated as follows, viz.,



Great French Crown *f*3, Spanish Dollar *f*2·15, Portuguese Joe *f*22 and Pistole *f*42. KERSAINT, in his Proclamation, stated that he was certain that as soon as a suitable circulating medium, worthy of the confidence of the people, should be provided, it would facilitate and increase business, and add to the prosperity of the colonies.

To build the new town and carry out the projects of the French authorities, the Colony and King's taxes were fixed at *f*2·10 each for all above twelve years and under sixty, without any exemption for invalids or free people, whether white or coloured. It was decided in September 1781, that all the kitchens in the new town should be bricked, to prevent the danger of fire. Most of the lots nearest the river had been taken up, but many of them were afterwards confiscated, because the grantees had not complied with the condition of building a house. It was generally called the New Town (*la Nouvelle Ville*) but it also went by the name of Longchamps.

The results of the census were embodied in a report to the Marquis DE CASTRIES,\* which comprehends Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice, and was sent to him in November 1782, of which the following is a translation:—

REPLIES to the questions of Monseigneur the Marquis DE CASTRIES, relative to the condition of the Colonies of Demerary, Essequibo and Berbice, in reference to their products and population, and what they ought to render to the King's Domain, November 1782.

The total number of negroes paying head-tax amounts, according to the estimate handed in by the Secretary, to 29,309, my estimate of 34,685 is made on the principle of adding one-seventh to this valuation, and further, I have added 1,200 negroes, which are those belonging to the King, (Company's slaves) and wanderers through the colonies, of which latter there is no census. This renders the estimate somewhat arbitrary, but still it coincides with the opinion of those who know most about the colonies, who estimate the negroes of the Demerary River alone at 20,000.

The exact estimate is, Demerary 12,559, Essequibo 8,700, Berbice 8,050; total 29,309.

\* MS. copy in Library of the Royal Agricultural and Commercial Society of British Guiana. There is no signature to the document.

I am assured that the population of the colony of Essequibo has been underestimated; the great area covered by this river, the distance of the habitations from each other, and the situation and number of its islands, all tend to produce the result that fraudulent returns are easy, especially in respect to foreign trade. As to the certainty of this latter statement, I was perfectly convinced after an examination of the list of products of this colony, where I found that rum was entirely unrepresented, although large quantities are manufactured there. The same spirit of investigation influenced me in the estimate, already given, of the revenue of the three colonies, of which however, further study led me to other conclusions; and here in spite of an error, detected by Monseigneur, of my having estimated the revenue at 13 millions, I was forced to make further reductions. But still my estimate is higher than that given in the Register of these colonies, which values the entire products of Demerara at 3,788,000, Essequibo 2,500,000, Berbice 1,000,000, total 7,288,000. At the time when this revenue was estimated products were at their lowest value; peace of course would send them up to 10 millions, and if only the inhabitants were more free in the sale of their goods, and less interested in protection, I feel quite certain that these colonies would give annual returns to the amount of twelve millions, to be realised alone in the department of commerce. The statistics may all be seen at the Secretary's office, but on examination these will not be found exact, so I have started from another basis.

The three Colonies contain altogether 387 large and 250 small plantations, the principal of these having 15 to 300 negroes each, and the second below 15. The produce of those having above 15 may be estimated altogether at an average of 30,000 each annually. The annual revenue of the large properties I put at 11,610,000, and the small 1,000,000, total 12,610,000. This is what we might expect to approximate to a correct estimate.

I have attempted some plans by which at a glance Monseigneur may be able to judge of the situation of these Colonies. That of Demerara was finished at the time of my departure, but there being no duplicate I charged M. DE LUSIGNAN to send a copy to Monseigneur as soon as possible, and am daily hoping for its arrival. Monseigneur will see in the inventories herewith enclosed, the nature, wealth and extent of the property already alluded to. I had them made with care, so as to give an exact idea of the condition of things at the time the King came into possession, knowing well that the English were bent on pillage. These possessions, which are the finest in the Colony, and are the best furnished with negroes, have scarcely ever contributed anything to the Sovereign Company, and this simply because of their bad administration. It was very important to state exactly how we found them, in order to avoid any claims their former masters might make in case of surrender. These concessions are in reality within the rights of

sovereignty, and are so by right of conquest, unless one chooses to consider these proprietary Companies under one of two aspects; first, as individuals in their territorial rights, or second, as sovereigns in their rights of dominion. The distinction will doubtless be attempted, although on the very face of it, it is false; for the large concessions granted to these Companies by the State were given on condition that they took upon themselves all the expenses of military and civil government, and kept the country in a proper state of defence. Does it not then follow that the sovereign who succeeds by right of conquest is bound to fulfil all these conditions, and by right of the same, does he not succeed to the privileges accorded to those formerly in charge? Guided by these principles I have found no difficulty in looking upon all this property as so much territory acquired by the King, and have thus taken measures accordingly, with the view of benefiting him.

There are six settlements (Society's estates) in Berbice and three (Company's estates) in Essequibo, of importance, and several others in both colonies lying fallow. Their products are sugar, coffee and cotton. I have entrusted the administration of the Essequibo property to a Frenchman whom I brought with me from Cayenne, who has lived for 11 years in the colony of Demerara and served me as a guide in the expedition. As soon as it becomes my privilege to work with Monseigneur I will submit to him the instructions given by me to this officer, when I will also tender an account of all those who are employed in the different departments of these Colonies. The products of these settlements (Company's estates) together with what we captured, have, up to the time of my departure, been our sole resource, and have enabled us to pay the French or neutral merchants who have provided us with provisions. The administration of these is in the hands of the Ordonnateur, and Monseigneur will recognise in the Instructions I have given Sr. MASSEAU, the precautions I have taken to prevent all abuse of authority, which the cupidity of those charged with the administration of these colonies might give occasion for. My project was to rent the property, and this I attempted in Berbice, but without success. Many obstacles were opposed, first, the uncertain state of politics in these colonies; second, the insubordination of the negroes on the plantations, which are continually being plundered, and often in a state of revolt; third, the impoverished condition of the colonists, who are more unfortunate in Berbice than in any other colony in the world. The three estates in Essequibo, which I had dedicated to the growth of provisions for the troops, rice, and the manufacture of rum, were beginning to be of use, so that I had reason to be satisfied with Sr. MASSEAU at my departure. I would add that besides these estates the King possesses some factories in Berbice, calculated to yield 60,000 livres to the Government of that colony, which usurped an outrageous monopoly.

It seemed to me only befitting the King's greatness to break these

fetters imposed by the avarice of the Company, which took no interest whatever in the prosperity of the colony, and accordingly, I have met the views of the colonists, by encouraging each to ply his industry in favour of those willing to pay. Nevertheless the profit yielded by these factories has in no sense diminished; it will however be necessary to organise workmen and build work-shops, and all this cannot be accomplished in a day. Meanwhile the colonists, satisfied with their liberty, continue to patronise the government factories, and I will guarantee that by not raising the prices, and by giving credit, the factories, in spite of the liberty accorded, will yield the same revenue. There are also some work-shops and negro artisans in Essequibo, the property of the King, and which they call in this colony *le Train*, while the person who administers the property of the Company is called Commissary of the *Train*. The Deputy of the Ordonnateur General in Demerara has this post, while the one in Berbice inspects and superintends the property of that colony, which as Monseigneur knows owes its allegiance to other masters than Demerary and Essequibo, with which colonies, until the English came on the scene, Berbice had nothing in common. Still there is no doubt that the situation of these three colonies destines them in the future to become one, the truth of which we have attempted to exemplify in the Memoir on General Defence where we show the three rivers to constitute but one property.

The capitation tax is the right of the Sovereign; this tax as levied in the colony fluctuates according to its needs. It has always been a source of discontent to the colonists, to whom an account has never been rendered although due. The proceeds of the tax go to defray the expenses of the Council, its dinners, refreshments, paper and ink, &c. The joint power possessed by the Council of levying or abolishing this tax appears to be contrary to the spirit of the laws, but matters have remained in the same condition, the capitulation confirming the same Magistrates and laws. Armed with the King's sanction I had hoped to arrive in time to prevent the evil of absolute ratification, but circumstances ordained otherwise. Under the present form of Government the capitation tax is collected by the Colonial Receiver, who, by right of his office is a member of the Council, while the Customs duties &c. which affect commerce, are received by the Collector of the Domain.

As may be conceived the combining of our laws with those of the late government has necessitated special arrangements, and I have done my best to adapt these so as to meet the demands of the old government and the rights of the new. I have nominated in place of the Collector, who was English, a French Receiver of Taxes, an honest man well acquainted with the place and liked by the people (M. DESBARATZ.)

This measure has prevented complications, so that matters are proceeding advantageously to the service. The two departments being in reality distinct it was better that they should be kept separate.

I enclose herewith a memorandum of the proceeds of the Customs Duty at 5 per cent during the four months of our possession. Meanwhile it must be understood that the first month counts for nothing, and that communication was only opened by the middle of March, so that the memorandum only represents the results of two months and a half, when trade was established to a small degree. Whereas two freights were warehoused waiting for ships from Europe to take charge of them, only one vessel appeared from Hamburg before my departure. Here it is proper to inform Monseigneur that I have exempted the Allied Nations from all Duties, giving them the same privilege as the French Nation, for the following reasons:—

Firstly, I considered that this concession would in no way include the Dutch, who no longer daring to show their flag, sail under a neutral banner, and thus pass as though they were neutral. Secondly, it was our interest to encourage the Americans, who used formerly to visit the rivers, where they would bring flour and take away rum and molasses, to establish dwellings in the new town, and thus increase the population and put new life in those departments necessary to commerce. They would be likely to carry away but few colonial commodities, and would decrease the receipts of the domain only to a very small degree. Finally, that should our commerce ever open free communication by the rivers, a most desirable thing, America would facilitate the sale of our merchandise.

My plea as regards the Spaniards is the desirability of opening communication with the Orinoque for the purpose of procuring live oxen, and that in spite of the heavy duty they make us pay, for we have need, while they have not. For the rest, the nation will some day get a good number of her commodities from these colonies, which, should political changes deliver them into the hands of France, would greatly enhance their importance. These are the motives which have influenced my actions.

As to the preliminary capitulation I have considered it my duty to draw the attention of Monseigneur to this matter, which from all I hear has been criticised very unfavourably. Another matter also meriting Monseigneur's attention is our motives for favouring the French. In the present state of affairs how were it possible for our commerce to enter into competition with the neutral powers, who not only carry freight at a much lower rate, but also insure for very moderate sums, besides, their boats are badly manned and equipped. Owing to the

present state of politics, which permits any nation to disguise herself, mariners have no country. I have thus permitted myself to enlarge on this important subject because I wished to explain the motives actuating me. Had I dared I would have thrown greater obstacles in the way of the commerce of neutral powers, but such measures confined to one colony must have resulted in starvation. In order to carry out such a scheme one should be Governor of all the conquered islands, when by its application to all our new possessions it would be possible to stifle English commerce.

I here take the liberty of sending Monseigneur a pamphlet on the condition of commerce in the Windward Islands, and of begging him to read the same. It is easy to understand that the declarations are never at any time very accurate, and that in the absence of Inspectors the earlier ones are particularly incorrect. I have submitted a plan to the Administrators who have succeeded me, for the prevention of fraud, but whether this has been confirmed or not I do not know. I hear that on the 1st of August M. L'ESCALLIER attempted to impose the tax of the Western Domain, in addition to that instituted by me, on which commerce complained and began to withdraw. I am surprised that this Administrator should make such a mistake; he ought to have seen that these two taxes could not be borne at the same time. I entreat Monseigneur to leave matters on the same footing as when I left there, it will be only necessary for everybody to be satisfied, to establish order.

The taxes in Essequibo are the same as in Demerara. Here is a list of those formerly raised, by which Monseigneur will see that the greater part were collected in Europe, which suited the Sovereign Company. The expenses were met by bills of exchange drawn on the exchequer, and the money paid in advance. The capture of the colonies by the English reversed this old state of things, then, on our arrival, just when Mr. KINGSROW was beginning to create order, it was plunged into chaos again. The responsibility of putting matters right, has greatly occupied my attention, but I have had so many other things to look after, and have been so feebly seconded in the work, that I can scarcely hope to have done all that was necessary. On the 1st of July the balance of taxes for 1780 had been received, and they were collecting for 1781, which was expected to be finished by the end of that month. This, together with the proceeds of the sale of the goods captured, should enable M. L'ESCALLIER in the course of 1782 to perform his task with ease. I except the extra expenses incurred in the fortifications, judged necessary for defence, which I had initiated before my departure.

As will be seen all this detail concerning taxation relates to the two capitation taxes already explained, and the Customs duty of 5 per cent, which can only be ascertained properly after three years of possession.

It was my intention to simplify the taxes of Berbice. I have left my plans, together with the instructions, to M. DE FAGAN, to be submitted by him to the Berbice Council, and the Administrators destined to govern the colonies. Up to the time of my departure, the old taxes, the revenue from the estates, and the income derived from the factories had sufficed to cover all the expenses of the colony, and had even paid for several cargoes of rations for the garrison of Demerary. Mons. FAGAN, the only Frenchman I could send to this colony, has administered everything with the aid of some others, and done his best. It must have been with feelings of pleasure and relief that he has handed over his account to the Secretary, and I will only hope that the latter may be one who serves the King with as much intelligence and disinterested zeal as M. FAGAN.

The estimation of the revenues of the three colonies at 600,000 livres is doubtless far below what it should be if they were wisely administered. But if instead, abuses should creep in ; if the cupidity I have suppressed with so much severity should spread over the colony ; if the estates are pillaged, the factories neglected, and the King's workmen employed by the officials ; if instead of tilling the ground, the negroes are allowed to huddle together in their huts as they seem to imagine they are entitled to do ; if the officials countenance false commercial returns, instead of suppressing the participators in the fraud : if in fact this colony, instead of being governed disinterestedly and with zeal, becomes a prey to the avaricious, then the valuation will be excessive, and they will try to persuade Monseigneur that it is so. But, he has only to bear in mind what we have told him, to be able to see that the same taxes and estates under individual management would be calculated to yield double our valuation. I have left with Messieurs L'ESCALIER and DE LUSIGNAN all the necessary information for enlightening them on these matters, to which I have added some useful notes. Doubtless Monseigneur will be constantly receiving precise accounts of the colonies, whereas I have never been able to see anything except rough estimates, partly because of the disorder prevailing after the conquest by the English, and partly also because the old Government took care to envelope everything in mystery directly it became a question of obtaining information.

To recapitulate and sum up the condition of the three colonies. As before said, Berbice has nothing in common with the other two, but if the tax of five per cent were scrupulously paid on the total produce of the three colonies of 7,288,000,\* it would yield nearly 600,000, estimating the import duty as yielding half the annual revenue. The export duty alone gives 364,400 ; it is easy therefore to see what remains to be collected :

\* The amounts appear to refer to livres, although this is not expressly stated.

On one side	...	...	...	...	364,400
Import duty on a sum of	...	3,644,000			180,240
Capitation tax of 5 per head on		20,000 negroes	...		100,000
Capitation of 2.10 on those of all ages		—	variable		—
Duties on rum	...	...	...	—	—
Duties on molasses	...	...	...	—	—
Berbice factories	...	...	...	60,000	—
Essequibo estates	...	...	...	—	—
Concessions, fines and confiscations				—	—

Experience alone could enable us to assign the actual yield of these taxes and estates; accounts kept by unfaithful servants proving unsatisfactory guides in the matter. Still we trust that we have said sufficient to give Monseigneur a conception of the resources capable of being developed in these colonies by an enlightened system of Government, and that when we assert that they should cost the King nothing, we assert only what is true.

We have enumerated the expenses which should be paid by the colony, but we have never asserted that for the future the government would be answerable for these expenses, nor that the two capitation taxes could blend into one so that for the future there would be but one liability. This method has seemed to me a simple one for ending the abuses attaching to this double assessment. Doubtless by confirming the capitulation in its entirety Monseigneur has provided the old government with arms to reclaim its rights, but the King's authority was so well established at the time of my departure, that unless those now in charge have permitted its abuse, Monseigneur will be master of the situation and able to regulate matters according to his judgment. All expenses, both public and private, are subject to government control. Of these, though not submitted to me by Monseigneur, the greatest are the wages, rations and emoluments of civil servants, all of whom having been retained under the provisions of the capitulation will claim the same privileges as formerly accorded, and which without injustice it were impossible to deny them. I enclose a list of these salaries, so that the minister can judge for himself respecting them. In the meantime with a view to avoid the necessity of rations, which during time of war are particularly difficult to furnish, I had suspended all these claims, promising myself on arriving here to induce Monseigneur to distribute salaries suitable to the employment and former rights of each individual.

Monseigneur will see by these remarks how much of an important nature the colonies offer for examination. I only hope he will order M. DE LA COCQX to second me in my efforts to prepare the work which at this juncture I should be glad to undertake with Monseigneur. Not till then will it be possible for me to establish anything like a fixed standard of these expenses, concerning which Monseigneur desires to be informed, that require



entire rearrangement. Written observations on the subject would decide nothing.

The country in the meantime is on sufferance; many of the people who at present serve the King in compliance with my orders being quite uncertain as to the nature of the positions finally awaiting them, I therefore entreat Monseigneur to give the subject his consideration. For the present I have the honour to send him these replies; I will give my attention to the list of expenses, and call to mind the various employments given out by me, with what I consider their equivalent salaries; in fact, furnish Monseigneur with all the necessary information for enlightening him on the points in question.

On the 15th of July the Marquis DE LUSIGNAN arrived in Demerara as Governor of the three rivers, and the same day addressed the Council, assuring them of the good intentions of the French Government. He went to Essequibo on the 3rd of September, where the Council protested against the innovations lately made, and spoke of the unsatisfactory condition of the river. LUSIGNAN had not the opportunity of doing much, as he died on the 16th of September, and was temporarily succeeded by the Count DE KERSAINT. His Commission was dated August 1st 1782, and headed, By CLAUDE CHARLES, Viscount DE DAMAS, Marshal of the camps and armies of the King, and Lieutenant-General of Martinique and its dependencies, appointing M. GUY COETNEMPEIN, Chevalier DE KERSAINT, Lieutenant of the Navy, as acting Governor of Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice. On the 7th of January 1782, the Marquis DE LA PERRIERE, Governor of Martinique, appointed M. L'ESCALIER as Commandeur of Demerara, and M. VIAL D'ALLAISE as second in command of the three Colonies, these being confirmed by the King on May 16th following. On the 1st of December, KERSAINT was succeeded as Governor by GEORGE MANGONAN DE LA PERRIERE, his appointment being confirmed by Royal Decree January 11th, 1783.

As may be presumed, all these changes did not conduce to the prosperity of the Colonies, although several things were done which tended to improve their position in many

respects, these however being commanded in such an arbitrary manuer, without consulting the Councils, that the Dutch were naturally very sore. The Colony Ongeld, which had been entirely under the control of the Councils, was fixed by the French authorities without consulting them, while to strengthen their position, two forts were erected at the mouth of the river, the one on the east bank being named Le Dauphin and that on the west La Reine. For these, forced contributions of slave labour were demanded, the planters complaining later that three thousand days had been contributed. The canals, which had been allowed to get in a very bad condition, were ordered to be cleaned and kept in order by the owners of the concessions on their banks, while the roads were directed to be kept up, that on the East Coast to be extended to Mahaica.

In January 1783, a local Post Office was established, ADRIAN LONCQ being appointed Postmaster of Demerara. He was bound to deliver the letters by four *white* servants, within four days after their arrival, one of the messengers to proceed along the West Coast, another to the West Bank as far as *Harmensteyn*, a third to the East Coast as far as *Courabana*, and the last to the East Bank up to *Land of Canaan*. Beyond these places, up the river, and to Mahaica, he was to deliver in the best way he could. For this he was entitled to charge five stivers for each letter. Those sending letters to Europe were to deliver them at the house of the Postmaster, and pay half a schelling (7 cents) for each, for which they might demand a receipt. Letters to Essequibo were to be sent by a trusty person, who was entitled to charge two schellings (28 cents), one for transport to Essequibo and the other for delivery. At the same time the first regular ferry-boat was established by the Postmaster, to cross the river every day an hour before high water, and return an hour after the tide commenced to fall. The fare was two schellings for each person, who

was allowed to take a pegall or box not exceeding thirty pounds, extra freight being charged ten stivers per hundred pounds.

By this time the whole line of coast to Mahaica had been granted for plantations, and as the French authorities were asked to make concessions to their countrymen, they gave these in the Pomeroon, on condition that planting was to be commenced within six months. On the 21st of January 1783 two free mulattoes, CORNELIS CAREL and DANIEL TIMMERMAN, received concessions in the Mahaicony Creek.

Taken altogether, the French occupation was disagreeable to all parties, except perhaps a very few of that nationality. The attempt to introduce a system entirely repugnant to both the Dutch and English inhabitants, caused a revulsion of feeling in favour of the British rule, and especially that of Governor KINGSTON. In the troubles that followed, the administration of KINGSTON was favourably compared with that of the French Governors, who, although nominally in the position of friends and allies, tried their very best to upset all the old customs and usages. The Councils of both rivers were under the immediate control of the French authorities, the principal personage in Demerara being the Ordonnateur L'ESCALIER, who appears to have been actually the chief, although nominally subordinate to the Governor of the three rivers, and assumed greater powers than any Directeur-General or Commandeur. Essequibo and Berbice had their own Ordonnateurs, and the Councils became of even less importance than that of Demerara, the latter being considered as the most important of the three rivers. Directeur-General TROTZ left the colony during the French occupation, and the nominal supremacy of Essequibo was then entirely lost.

In January 1783, the Reverend Mr. LINGIUS was arrested for an offence against the Government, and sent out of the Colony, so that for several years there was no Predicant

in Demerara. Services were performed however, by the Roman Catholic Almoner of the Troops, Father EDWARD LINDEKER, who was asked by some of the inhabitants to remain in Demerara, instead of leaving with the French troops at the evacuation. This being permitted by the Council, he settled here, and probably held services in one or more of the dwellings of the planters, in the absence of a proper church. The Reverend Father did not live long, and in January 1785, certain articles which had been taken over by the Orphan Chamber as his private effects, were ordered by the Council to be given up, as being the property of the Roman Catholic Church.

Cruelty to slaves was not discountenanced by the French, as appears to have been done by the English. The necessity for a jail for whites and blacks was discussed in 1783, and it was decided that it should be erected, but no suitable prison existed for a long time afterwards. In July of the same year, the Negro CATO was convicted of attempting to steal a bag of coffee, and ordered to be publicly flogged to bleeding, to be branded, to have both ears cut off, and finally, to work in chains for life. In March previous the Negro LOUIS, having been convicted of murder, was sentenced to be broken on the wheel, where he was to remain from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., after which his head was to be cut off and stuck on a post as a warning. ELIZABETH DE WEVER, having cruelly flogged her mulatto woman MASHY, and poured melted sealing wax into the wounds, was fined eighty guilders and severely reprimanded about the same time.

## CHAPTER XV.

### *DOWNFALL OF THE COMPANY, 1783—1791.*

Meetings at the Hague in anticipation of the surrender of the two rivers to the Netherlands—Projects for re-establishing the Company in its former position—Ways and Means—Peace signed—French evacuate the colonies—Revulsion in favour of Dutch ideas—Agitation in favour of the State and against the Company—Administration of Joseph Bourda—Jan L'Espinasse appointed Directeur-General—Colonial Councillors refuse to sit as nominees of the Company—Protests—Determined opposition of Planters to new regulations—Ordinance as to treatment of servants and slaves—Stabroek—Returns for assessment of the head-taxes refused—The planters defy the "pretended" Council—A pluralist official—Plan of redress formulated—The Company refuse to adopt it—Commissioners appointed by the States General—They arrive in Demerara and settle the disputes—Company wound up by States General—Slave troubles and desertions—Bush negroes—Land and road regulations—Burial ground—Ferry—Printing press introduced.

**I**N the first half of 1783, negotiations were set on foot for a general peace, and in consequence, the West India Company began to consider what should be done with the two rivers. On the 7th of May, Messrs. KEMPNAAB, LAMPSIUS and the Advocate of the Company, went to the residence of the Stadtholder's representative, at the Hague, to discuss the state of affairs, where they met Messrs. HELM BODDAERT and HASE BOMME of the Chamber of Zeeland, who had been deputed for the same purpose. Their main object was to devise a plan for regulating the government and defence of the two rivers to the satisfaction of the respective Chambers, so that there should no longer be any reason for the differences which had formerly existed.

In the first place, they unanimously agreed, before making any propositions, that the finances of the Company were utterly insufficient to do anything, and they therefore would have to ask the assistance of the State. Application having been made to the Ministers of His Highness the Stadtholder, they intimated their willingness to assist the Company, but doubted whether they could induce the different States to do anything, as the Province of Holland would not furnish cash, unless the trade of Essequibo and Demerara should be declared entirely free to all inhabitants of the Netherlands, and further, that the regulations of 1762, in regard to the preference of Zeeland, be annulled. This having been provisionally accepted, the following points were taken as a basis :—

1. That the Political Government of the rivers should be put on a fixed and well regulated footing.
2. That care should be taken to secure a good and prompt administration of Justice.
3. That, as far as possible, steps should be taken to defend the colony, and protect the interests of the colonists.
4. And lastly, that the amount of the funds necessary to accomplish and maintain these, should be fixed.

With respect to the first point it was proposed to place the supreme control of both rivers in the hands of one officer, with the title of Directeur-General, and, as Demerara was more convenient for shipping than Essequibo, they thought the seat of Government should be established there. The island of Borsselen being too small for a capital, it was thought that Plantation *Jonge Rachel*, at the mouth of the Hobabo Creek, would be more suitable, and should be bought for £150,000. It would be well if the Political Government were placed in the hands of the Council of Policy, which should consist of the Directeur-General, and the four servants of the Company next to him in rank. All the officers and servants of the Company should receive proper salaries, so as to be independant of all other em-

ployment, or questionable methods of obtaining profit. The River Essequibo should be governed by a Council, as in Demerara, under a Commandeur, subordinate to the Directeur-General, who would be the principal authority in that river. Combined meetings might be held in Demerara, two members attending from each Council, those from Demerara being paid £25 each for every session, while those from Essequibo should have £100 each besides travelling expenses.

On the second point, it was recommended that each river should have its own Court of Justice, consisting of six protestant members, to be chosen by the Directeur-General, with the approval of the Ten, from a nomination by the Burgher Court Martial, of three persons for each vacancy, selected from the colonists. Properly qualified legal gentlemen should be appointed as Presidents of these Courts, who ought to be suitably remunerated.

In regard to the third point, Demerara was to be put in a position for defence, and provided with a suitable garrison, the Brandwagt to be put in good order and properly manned, and the same with some other forts. Essequibo should also be properly fortified and garrisoned, and a post be established at the Orinoco, to make such a defence there as might be thought necessary. They considered that 250 soldiers would be sufficient for the whole colony, for whom the necessary ammunition would also have to be provided, as well as proper barracks.

A *Concept Plan* of buildings proposed to be erected in Demerara was then agreed to, which enumerated them as follows :—

A Church, Council House with janitor's residence, Government House with accommodation for Assistant or Clerk, a House for the President of the Court of Justice, his Secretary and a Clerk, residences for the Captain Commandant, for the Fiscal, his Assistant and one servant, for the

Receiver of taxes and his Assistant, for the Secretary, Clerk, and two Assistant Clerks of Policy, for the Commissary of Military Stores, and Inspector of buildings, for the Predicant and Schoolmaster, for the Captain-Lieutenant, Surgeon Major, and one Assistant Surgeon, also a Weigh-house and Magazine, with residence for the Weigh Master, a Guard-house and Arsenal, Barracks for fifty men and rooms for two Officers and sub-Officers, Hospital and residence for the Assistant Surgeon, Jail with residence for the Under-Schout and two Dienaars, Workshop, and house for the workmen, Powder Magazine, Lavatory, and finally, a negro range, with house for the foreman.

The Council of Policy in Demerara should consist of the Directeur-General, President of the Court of Justice, Fiscal, Receiver of Taxes, and the Commissary of Military Stores, besides three colonists, with a Secretary, his Clerk and two assistants. The Court of Justice was to consist of a President, with a salary of *f*4,000 and *f*2,000 besides as Councillor of Policy, and six members chosen from the colonists, who should receive *f*30 per session, which amount was to be divided among those present. There was to be a Secretary of Justice who was also to be a Notary, on a salary of *f*1000 and fees, with a Clerk and four assistants. The Fiscal was to be paid *f*1,000 as such, as Councillor of Policy, *f*2,000, and as Military Auditor *f*800, besides a third of the fines. The Under-Schout was to have *f*1,000 and the two Dienaars *f*400 each, with rations and uniforms. The salary of the Directeur-General was to be *f*12,000, besides *f*2,000 as President of Policy, that of the Receiver five per cent on his receipts and *f*2,000 as Councillor, and that of the Commissary as such, *f*1,500, as Book-keeper *f*1,200, and as Councillor *f*2,000. The Secretary of Policy as such *f*1,000, with other emoluments, as Vendue-Master two-thirds per cent on vendues, besides three per cent on the receipts. The Predicant *f*2,400, the Sexton, who was



also to be choir-leader and schoolmaster, *f*1,000, and the Janitor *f*800. Among the Military, the Captain Commandant over both rivers was to get *f*4,000 and the Flag-Money, his second in command *f*3,000, and the third officer *f*1,500, the soldiers being put down at *f*300 each, while the Surgeon-Major was put at *f*1,200, and his two assistants at *f*800 each. The Commandeur of Essequibo was to receive *f*7,000, the President of the Court of Justice *f*4,000, and other officials a little less than those in Demerara. Rations were to be entirely abolished, except for the sub-officers of Justice and those of the Military and common soldiers.

It was estimated that the cost of all these improvements would be a million guilders, and that a quarter of a million would be required annually to keep them up. To raise the current expenses, the usual tax of *f*2.10 and the Ongeld of *f*1.10, that is *f*4 on each slave, might be reckoned upon, while the acre money of three stivers on cultivated, and one stiver on uncultivated, lands might be collected. In addition to these, the stamp duty and vendue tax would bring in something. As there would be no money in the colony, it was thought that some circulating medium should be introduced, and meanwhile, taxes must be paid in produce as before, except that the value be reduced to, coffee 3 stivers, cotton 10 stivers, and cacao 3 stivers.

As the delegates knew little of what had been done since the two rivers had been captured by the English, it was thought desirable to accept the offer of M. B. HARTSINCK, who was proceeding to Demerara, and depute him and C. C. CANNE, the late Inspector of the Company's buildings, to report on the state of affairs, giving them authority to make all necessary enquiries, for which their expenses would be paid, and a gratuity of *f*200 given to HARTSINCK, while CANNE would be restored to his office at *f*200 a month. This having been settled, the delegates were sent to Demerara, and the Company petitioned the States General for

the loan of £3,000,000, payable in annual instalments of £500,000 each, which however was not granted, the States only giving £800,000.

From a letter of the Ten, dated September 24th following, it seems that the projected arrangements very soon required alteration; among other things, the Presidents of the Courts of Justice were found too expensive, and therefore were not appointed. The Fiscals were to be the legal advisers of the Courts, but they must never administer the Government, that being left, in the absence of the President, to the officer next in rank. The salaries were at the same time reduced to £600 and £400, for the Fiscals of Demerara and Essequibo respectively. Several other reductions were made at the same time. Police constables were not considered necessary, as the Fiscals could always command the aid of the Military. To prevent the slaves from running away, the authorities were directed to conciliate the Indians, especially the Caribs, who might be called upon to help in case of a slave revolt. Land should be given to them so that they might be induced to remain in one place, and presents made at regular intervals, the Captains or Owls being provided with silver-headed sticks of office, with the Arms of the Company engraved thereon, as well as silver collars, rum, &c. For internal defence, a few Military posts were to be established in the upper rivers. A quay of brick-work in front of the city and fort would, they thought, be the cheapest and most substantial protection against the inroads of the sea. As the education of youth in the two rivers was in a most deplorable state, they proposed to establish a boarding school, where children might be taught the rudiments of education and religion. Demerara, they said, was the only country under the sun where there was no place for public worship, and therefore a Church was absolutely necessary.

Meanwhile, peace had been signed at Paris on the 3rd of

September 1783, and on February 16th 1784, the French authorities in the three rivers declared officially their intention of evacuating these territories. The two delegates, HARTSINOK and CANNE, had already arrived in Demerara, bringing letters from the Ten, authorising the Commandeur and Council to take over the administration until further arrangements should be made.

On the 6th of March 1784, the two rivers were finally given over, and the Council took the Oath of Allegiance to the Netherlands. A Publication was at the same time ordered, calling upon all the inhabitants to acknowledge the supremacy of their High Mightinesses, and take the oath at once, those who refused being ordered to leave the colony within two months, or they would be forcibly expelled. It was also declared, that all Orders, Resolutions and Publications of the States General, concerning the import of foreign manufactures, and the export of produce in foreign vessels, that had been in force before the taking of the river, were now again in force, and that the Post Office was abolished, mails being again made up at the Secretary's Office. As Commandeur SCHUYLENBURG wanted to go to the Netherlands for the purpose of giving an account of the transactions connected with his administration and the capture of the English, he resigned his office.

On the following day Councillor JOSEPH BOURDA was invited to take over the post of Commandeur *ad interim*, which having been done, the Council continued their work of reverting as far as possible to the same position as before the war. The delegates having already reported to the Ten, that a town had been commenced at the Brandwagt, the project for that on Plantation *Jonge Rachel* was therefore abandoned, it being decided that the new town should remain the seat of government. It was resolved at this meeting, to transfer the Secretary's Office from Borsselen Island to the house lately occupied by the French Governor,

and arrangements were made for building houses for Inspector CANNÉ and other officials. Fort le Jeune Dauphin was named William Frederick, and efforts were made to wipe out all other traces of French occupation.

The news that the two rivers were again to be under the arbitrary control of the Company was by no means agreeable to the majority of the colonists. Under the English as well as the French, they had enjoyed free trade to a certain extent, with better markets for their produce, and had been on the whole very well satisfied. A number of Frenchmen, who had commenced Plantations, resented the fact of their being cut off from trading with their own country, while the English planters, who had been expecting some attempts of their countrymen to recover the colony, felt quite disgusted.

On hearing the unwelcome news the following verses were privately circulated throughout the two rivers :—

“ Hoe! weer de dwinglandy in Neêrland opgedragen,  
 Myn God! waar wil dat heen: Valt dit in Hollands smaak  
 Of vindt myn Amstelstadt dan ook daar in behagen?  
 Ik acht die tyding eene onmoogelyke zaak,  
 Bataafsche schryvers komt, helpt my dit monster vellen;  
 Te wapen, vliegen wy ten dappren pennestryd,  
 De vrye drukpers laat geen Batavieren kwellen,  
 Zy heeft zig reeds voorlang der Vryheid toegewyd;  
 Op, Batavieren! op! traacht dwingelandy te weeren  
 Men stoot het ondiër op, en jaag het uit ons land;  
 Of sluit' het eenwig daar het nimmer ons kan deeren,  
 Of, tot meer zekerheid, men help het liefst van kant.”

Which may be thus freely translated :—

What! Tyranny again in Holland's hand!  
 My God! What next! Is this the Dutch,  
 Or does my Amstel town to this consent?  
 The news I think must be entirely false.  
 Batavian pens arise and give your help,  
 To arms we'll fly and kill this monstrous thing,  
 With a free press Batavians can't be slaves:  
 She long ago clasped freedom in her arms.  
 Up, Dutchmen, up! Strive to oppose tyranny,  
 Uproot the monster, drive him from the land!  
 Let him be chained, never to rise again,  
 Or, for our safety, let him die at once.

We have already seen what were the projects of the Company, it will be as well now to show what were the ideas of some of the colonists.\* In their opinion the two rivers should be properly fortified, and a few men-of-war be always kept cruising along the coast, the cost of these being borne by the State. The colony ought to belong to the nation, not to a trading Company, and the taxes be light. If this were the case, all the Provinces of the Netherlands would have a share of the trade, and consequently of the profits, while the colony would be free to develop herself. The state should offer premiums for agricultural improvements, the breeding of horses, &c., and otherwise foster and aid the colonists in every possible way. That there would be no loss in doing this, was proved by the fact that Demerara had advanced steadily, notwithstanding the obstructive policy of the Company. The first planters were poor, but they managed to get on without debt; then came the credit system, by which money was obtained and spent on the barren land of the upper river. This led to so many failures that all advances were stopped at a time when they might have been made with certainty of profit. The coast lands were fertile, and would be sure to pay well, but as the drainage was very expensive, they wanted capital, which unfortunately, on account of the previous failures, they could not get. Slaves were wanted in great numbers, which the Company would not supply, while those who were sent were sold at higher prices than in either Surinam or St. Eustatius. The State should take over the African slave factories, and supply the colonies at cost price. The Company had been asking for a subsidy, saying that if it was not granted the two rivers would be given back to their High Mightinesses. Very well, let the States General refuse it, and please all the inhabitants by taking the alternative.

\* Brieven Aristodemus en Sinoerus.

It may be noticed that the value of produce as shown by the new regulations as to taxes, was put lower than either under the English or French rule. The planters wanted a wider market, an attorney telling the proprietors in Amsterdam, that if there were to be no new settlers, no buyers, no slaves, and no proper servants sent out, he would strongly advise them to abandon the place, and be satisfied with the first loss. The colony was quite useless to the Company, and had always been a source of trouble and loss, why then was it not given up? In time of need no support was given, while the fortifications were quite useless, although they took away the Company's profits. The Ten knew absolutely nothing of the state of affairs; they sent out regulations and orders which they even forgot themselves. Should they ever publish all these, they themselves, and the whole nation, would be dumbfounded and ashamed at their contents. The attorney winds up by saying:—"I have done my duty—I have told everything—I am resigned—my conscience is clear—I have tried my very best to save my friends in the colony from ruin. I say again—I write it here and dare loudly to proclaim it—yes, and to have it printed in leaded type—that it will be at the personal responsibility of the rulers of the nation, if they do not minutely enquire into the state of the colony, which is infinitely worse than they expect, or have ever been informed. Yes! it is unpardonable neglect, when the parties interested in the colony omit to represent the causes of the bad state of affairs, and the means available for redressing these grievances, and establishing order by reforming the Constitution."\*

The administration of JOSEPH BOURDA was characterised by the attention shown to petty matters, especially in upsetting some of the obnoxious measures of the French. Roman Catholics had been lately appointed to several offices, and a

\* *Briefven Aristodemus en Sincerus.*

Priest had held services, while no service of the Reformed Church had been performed for several years. It was therefore resolved to petition the Ten for two Predicants, but as we have seen this want had been anticipated. On the 17th of March 1784, it was reported that small-pox was raging in Demerara, free negroes and mulatto huxsters were therefore forbidden to carry on their trade. Other local Publications were, that no one was to drag batteaux over the dams in wet weather, that corpses found floating in the river must be taken up by the owners of the plantations near which they were found, and buried, on pain of a fine of *f*100, that a fee of *f*100 was to be paid on manumissions, and that property left by manumitted negroes was to devolve to their former masters.

By a Resolution of the Ten, of September 14th 1784, the new town in Demerara was named Stabroek, in honour of NICOLAAS GEELVINK, Lord of Castricum, Backum and Stabroek, who was then the representative of the Stadtholder in the Company, and President of the Ten.

In September 1784, JAN L'ESPINASSE was commissioned as Directeur-General of the two rivers, and in December following, J. C. BEET received his appointment as Commandeur of Essequibo. The news was received on the 4th of January 1785, together with the Resolutions as to the change in the constitution, and caused considerable disturbance among the Councillors and especially the officials. On the 8th, an Ensign and thirty soldiers arrived, the latter having neither swords nor uniforms, and not even sufficient fire-arms; this was the first instalment of the grand force intended to protect the two rivers. The same day PIETER VAN HELSDINGEN was elected in the usual manner, from a nomination by the Kiesheers, and on the 20th BOURDA and three others protested in the Council against the representatives of the colonists being excluded by the new regulations. They quoted a number of precedents, from that of

the first representative in 1739, and stated that the Keisheers had been adapted from the custom of Middelburg. Under what they considered the Constitution of 1773, the official and colonial votes had been equal, now the Company wanted to have five to three, and these latter only nominees of their own. They hoped that their High Mightinesses would grant the Colony a Charter similar to that of Surinam.

On the 2nd of February JAN L'ESPINASSE was installed as Directeur-General. Immediately after, JOSEPH BOURDA presented a Memorial, complaining of the new state of things, while Councillor A. P. SWAEN followed with a strong protest against the arbitrary doings of the Company. Fiscal ANTONY MEERTENS, who had been confirmed in his office, defended the action of the Company, declaring as a lawyer, that the new rules were within its rights and not an infringement of its Charter. The Directeur-General then read the appointments of D. H. MACARE, as Commissary of Vendues and Councillor, and M. B. HARTSINCK, as Receiver and Councillor, after which came the nomination of JOSEPH BOURDA and PIETER VAN HELSDINGEN as representatives of the citizens, on which the two colonial Councillors refused to sit as nominees of the Company. There not being a quorum, the meeting could not go on, and it was proposed that H. JONES and H. H. POST, be assumed, but the latter asked to be excused, when H. REIM was proposed, after which the meeting adjourned.

On the following day BOURDA and HELSDINGEN sent in a long Memorial, in answer to the Fiscal's defence of the Company, to which MEERTENS replied in justification. On the 8th the two nominated Councillors, JONAS and REIM, sent letters declining the honour, and the Fiscal proposed to convene the Burgher Officers, and deliberate with them as to what should be done in the case. The Directeur-General however, refused to do any thing of the sort, but went on with his proposing, this time nominating C. J.



HECKE, A. LONCK and J. BASTIAANSE, but all these also declined. On the 10th C. J. HECKE was at last persuaded to accept office, and the Council proceeded to business with the one Colonial member. It was then resolved that Masters of vessels, having provisions on board, should be required to publish the same along the coasts, and up the rivers as far as the roads extended, and that the Directeur-General be allowed to have a plantation, but not to administer private estates or accept sequestration. Then D. BRETON and J. BROTHERRSON were nominated to fill the vacant office, but they also declined. It was suggested that inducements should be offered to farmers and cattle-breeders to settle in the colony, and that a Superintendent of sea defences should be appointed to make provision against the breaches of dams on the East Coast. Vendue-Master MACARE then said, that he had been looking over his Instructions and found them entirely unworkable. Then came the arranging of the various offices, which was something quite different to the grand ideas of the meeting at the Hague. Nothing is said about the score of new buildings projected, but the house formerly occupied by the French Governor was to be used as a Court House, Secretary's office, and temporarily, as a Church, that formerly occupied by the Ordonnateur, to be the Governor's residence, while the old Barracks was to be jail, residence of the Sub-Fiscal and Vendue-Office. The Fiscal reported, that he was paying a rental of *f*1,500 per annum for a small house, which he thought very high. On the 15th, the first Clerk of the Secretary complained of the want of assistants; formerly there had been twelve clerks, now there were only four, and these could not do all the work. On account of the difficulty in getting Councillors, it was then resolved that persons refusing to act without lawful excuse should be fined *f*3,000.

Thus began the great struggle between the people and

the Company. Led on by JOSEPH BOURDA, WILLEBORDUS RAMAKER, ANTHONY PIETER SWAEN and PIETER VAN HELSDINGEN, the whole colony took up a firm stand against all innovations that were not according to the old regulations, or passed by a Council properly constituted. The Directeur-General had very few supporters, and was much hampered by a stubborn but not aggressive resistance.

In Essequibo, the Government had been administered by Councillor BROODHAGEN since the departure of the French, but on the 25th of February L'ESPINASSE arrived at Fort Island, immediately demanding an account of what had been done during the *ad interim* period. This was at first refused, but after a little bluster the Council agreed to give the statement. Councillors GEELHOED, BROODHAGEN and DUYNEN, then entered a protest against the decision of the Company, as to their being dismissed from their posts. The Official Councillors chose Messrs. VAN DOORN and MILBORN, who both declined, explaining their reasons for refusing. The next day ALBERTUS BACKER and PAUL WM. JANSEN were chosen, and as they did not refuse the Council proceeded to business. Commandeur BERT arrived on the 4th of August, but as he was entirely subordinate to the Directeur-General, he made little impression. The people of Essequibo joined in the petitions, memorials and protests, but did not take such a firm stand as those of Demerara.

The new Council of Demerara, by order of the Company, imposed a head-tax of *f*6 on slaves, which the planters, almost to a man, refused to pay. They were willing to contribute the old tax of *f*2.10, which had been in existence for so long a time, and also the Ongeld, if it was imposed by consent of the Colonial representatives, but absolutely refused to go any further. On the 11th of February a Publication was issued calling for a return of the number of slaves, also ordering persons selling slaves to

prove property, and that there should be one white man to every fifty slaves. The majority of the planters refused to send in their usual returns, unless the tax was put on the old footing, and the business of the colony came almost to a stand-still.

Petition after petition was sent to the authorities in the Netherlands, the States General and the Ten, while protests were continually being entered against the action of the Directeur-General and the Fiscal. The inhabitants considered it fully proven, that unless the Council was formed of elective as well as official members, it was unconstitutional, and that therefore the laws, regulations, and sentences of this so-called Council had no force, and could not be legally executed. They offered to pay the old taxes as they had existed in 1780, and even the Ongeld, provided the account for this was kept separate, and that it was used for certain specified purposes. They did not consider themselves bound to pay anything at all, as long as there was no Council or government in the colony, but to prevent misrepresentation and to show that they were standing up for their rights, they made this offer. If any colony, said they to the States General, had a right to demand freedom of taxes, if only for one year, it was this, taking into consideration the great losses, as well direct as indirect, from war and its consequences. These began with the loss of thirty-two vessels, at sea and in the rivers, of which many were full and others partly laden with the produce of the colony. This was followed by a great scarcity of the necessaries of life. During several months they had no ships to load with produce, which caused the sugar to run to molasses and a lot of coffee to be damaged by weevils. When, in the latter part of 1781, some English vessels arrived and took in their loads, to sail early in 1782, then came the French squadron to disappoint their expectations, and, by right of war, the produce in the Eng-

lish vessels was again confiscated. In the last month of the British rule, supplies of provisions came in, but this new change caused everything to rise to enormous prices, which lasted until the arrival of neutral vessels from the islands. The capture by the French caused great suffering, from which they had been free under the English. The latter being attacked from all sides, and not having enough troops, the Governor came alone. Having no garrison they did not require a fort, but the French, being in another position, took care to build one, for which the planters were compelled to supply slaves, so that during 1782 and 1783, three thousand days of labour were supplied. To all these hardships, was added a double head-tax under the French, and a great loss on their produce shipped under neutral flags, by which the returns on sugar were reduced to almost nothing and on coffee and cotton to half their value. They flattered themselves that their High Mightinesses would take these things into consideration, and grant them freedom of taxes for one year, treating their remote subjects in the same manner as they did those at home when they suffered from inundations.\*

In the "Letters of ARISTODEMUS and SINCERUS," we find the points of disagreement between the Company and the planters put in very forcible language. In one place, the writer says that in the beginning of 1784, news arrived of the deliberations at the Hague, and that a *Concept-Plan* had been formulated for improving the Government of the colony. They were however grievously disappointed at the result, which alas! instead of improving, had put things on a worse footing. In all their resolutions, instead of choosing the best, most useful and most necessary alterations, they had simply considered the low state of the Company's finances. Presidents of the Court of Justice had been recommended at the Hague, and Councillors

\* Brieven Aristodemus en Sincerus.

at £2,000 each, but both these projects had been rejected. The Sub-Fiscal was to receive £1,000, instead of which they gave him only £450, a salary that no respectable gentleman would look at, as the meanest white in the colony got £300 to £400, besides free board, lodging and washing. The cheese-paring policy of the Ten was shown by the fact, that in the *Concept-Plan* the annual expenditure was set down as £250,000, this they reduced later to £187,550, but now they had brought it down to £116,800. By the new regulations, no produce was to be shipped without previous notification to the Secretary, of its quantity and quality, on pain of confiscation. The planters did not know why this was issued, but believed it to be intended to prevent anything being consigned to other than the mortgagees. This they considered unjust to the owners of estates that were unencumbered, and it caused a great deal of trouble to those who lived at Mahaica and far up the river. Another regulation that made it incumbent on the planter to keep one white man to fifty slaves, on pain of a fine of £1,000, was also unworkable. They had been given two years to comply with this, but considered it doubtful whether such a number of whites could be secured. They considered it useless and troublesome, as soldiers could be maintained at a lower figure, and even if it could be carried out it would tend to promote disturbance, as they did not want more whites than were actually required. Where there were too many, the white servants quarrelled among themselves and put a bad example before the negroes. The Directeur-General and his so-called Council, had lately republished an old regulation, which in its new form, stated that the Fiscal was authorised and ordered to prevent any public meetings being held either in the town of Stabroek, Fort Zeelandia, or in the rivers and creeks, on *pain of whipping*. This was especially intended to prevent their discussing the actions

of the pretended Council. A trading Company, they thought, was utterly unfit to manage an agricultural colony, as it only looked after its own interests, and wanted to prevent the planters buying or selling in any other way than through its agents. The following is an extract from one of the letters of "ARISTODEMUS":—

"Is the trade with the United States of North America forbidden by these territories, or by Colonial laws? You say neither, believing yourself justified in saying so, from the fact that Flag duty and other charges have, among others, been specially fixed and charged in Surinam.

"But I believe, my friend, that you are wrong. The North American trade is certainly prohibited to Surinam and Berbice, by the laws of these territories, these being the only two Dutch agricultural establishments on the mainland of America, which have been, and now are, known and recognised as such by their highest authorities, and for which, fundamental laws have been made by their High Mightinesses. This colony of Essequibo and Demerara has never had, up to the present, *any Charter or fundamental laws whatever*, either as an establishment, much less as an agricultural settlement of the Dutch people. It may be likened to a *bastard* (to use a common expression) a child not yet acknowledged or accepted by his father, or at least not hitherto recognised."

Another cause of dissatisfaction, was the order of the Ten dated October 1st 1784, for the regulation and treatment of servants and slaves. The preamble stated that, different enactments, ordinances and provisions, had from time to time being issued against all improprieties and irregularities in the Government of estates, and the conduct of the workmen and servants thereon employed, and more particularly the slaves. These had been neglected, from which the most fatal consequences often proceeded, this tending to the prejudice of the public welfare generally. All proprietors, attornies and managers were therefore directed to strictly observe their contracts with their white servants, and at the expiration of their term to give them written discharges and certificates, which, if they refused, the servants might cite them before the Roll Court. No servant, whether manager, surgeon or workman, might

leave his employment until the expiration of his engagement, on pain of a fine of *f*150, besides any other forfeiture that might have been stipulated by the contract. No one was to entice or attempt to seduce away the servants of another, by offers of increase of wages, or any other inducements, on pain of a fine of *f*300 for each offence. Six months' notice on either side was to be given, if the parties intended to terminate the engagement at the end of the contract, otherwise the relations were to continue a year longer. Servants were bound to serve with diligence, and might be discharged if they behaved contrarily, their wages being paid however up to the time of discharge. If they treated their masters disrespectfully, used abusive language, or dared to strike them (whether in drink or not) on complaint being made to the Fiscal they were liable to imprisonment on bread and water for a few days, or mild corporeal punishment. If the servants rendered themselves drunk and incapable, idled away their time, or neglected their work, they were liable to similar punishments. Free tradesmen, who had undertaken any work, might not leave it unfinished without permission, provided they were supplied with materials, on pain of a fine of *f*150. It was prohibited to every one to traffic with slaves, or to buy produce from them, the only articles allowed to be purchased being vegetables and ground provisions, the crops of their own gardens, and live stock, which they were permitted to rear. In payment for these might be given money, clothing, or trinkets, but neither fire-arms, gunpowder, nor lead, under a penalty of *f*300. All slaves were prohibited from selling or bartering any produce whatever, on pain of a severe flogging for the first offence, and for the second, a heavier sentence by the Court of Justice. No one was to punish the slave of another person, except with one blow of a stick or cane, for insolence, on pain of a fine of *f*500. The proprietor, or one of his servants, was to

remain as far as possible on the estate during Sundays and holidays, to prevent insubordination, and no estate was to be left at night without at least one white servant, on pain of a fine of £300. When a slave ran away, notice was to be given at the Secretary's Office, with all the necessary information, and the same when he should be recaptured, on pain of a fine of £60 for each slave not reported. When a runaway was taken, if the owner was known, notice was to be sent to him, and the negro restored on payment of £12.10 if taken within the river, £25 if beyond the river, and £50 if beyond Morocco Post or Mahaicony Creek, the owner being bound, if on the west of the Boeraserie Creek, to send him to Fort Island, and if on the East, to Stabroek, where he would be severely punished in the owner's presence, no further punishment being allowed. If the owner of a captured runaway was unknown, or did not release him, the slave was to be sent to jail, where the reward would be paid, and the delinquent employed in the public service. If the slaves of a plantation went to the adjoining estate to steal provisions, the delinquents were to be captured, if possible, and brought to their owners, or else a complaint be made, when their owners were bound to make reasonable satisfaction, or if no satisfaction was given the matter might then be brought before the Fiscal. If a slave committed an offence that absolutely required punishment, this was to be inflicted with reason, and without cruelty or passion, by or on behalf of the proprietor, and was not to exceed at the utmost twenty-five lashes. and, to avoid accidents, this was not to be inflicted until the offender had been laid on his face, and tied between four stakes. No owner was to use any severer punishment than this, but if such was necessary, bring the slave to the jail to be dealt with according to sentence, under a penalty of £900. Every planter was to see that his slaves were properly sup-



plied with provisions, for which purpose, they were bound to have provision grounds, properly planted, in the ratio of one acre for five negroes; they must also provide a weekly allowance, and proper clothing, under penalties of *f*90 for every acre less than the regulation, and *f*150 for every slave not supplied with the proper allowance. When the slaves were dancing or carousing, those of neighbouring estates were not to be allowed to join them without passes from their masters; and when the dance was allowed, the owner and his servants were to keep watch to prevent disturbances, under a penalty of *f*150. Dances might be allowed once a month, not including the holidays, but never kept up later than two o'clock in the morning, on pain of a fine of the same amount. When sent off the estates, slaves were to be provided with passes, especially if allowed out at night. The houses of the slaves were to be examined at intervals, to see if they had any weapons or ammunition concealed, and, with the exception of one or two huntsmen, no slaves were to be entrusted with fire-arms. It was expressly prohibited, that any one should be buried who had died suddenly, or under suspicious circumstances, or, in the case of slaves, immediately or shortly after punishment, or any one who had committed suicide, until information had been given to the Fiscal, or to the nearest surgeon, who would give a certificate to the Fiscal. If any one wanted to place the head of a negro suicide on a pole, as a deterrent to others, he was to apply to the nearest authority, the Burgher Officer. It was forbidden to work slaves on Sundays and holidays, except in cases of necessity, such as a breach of the dam, or, by special permission, under peculiar circumstances. No negroes were to be allowed to walk on the roads or streets of the town after seven o'clock, without passes and lights, under penalty of *f*30, to be paid by the owner, and if without his consent, arbitrary correction. No negro was to be

permitted to walk along the road with a gun or a sharp weapon, without a special written permission of his master, on pain of arbitrary punishment. Finally, negroes were not to sing their usual songs on board vessels where there were whites, on pain of arbitrary correction. Copies of this Proclamation were to be affixed in all public places and taverns, and the tavern-keepers were ordered to suffer it to remain, on pain of their places being closed for three months.

This Ordinance was considered by the planters as not only a slur upon them, but also an interference between master and servant. They thought the assumption of half a score of Dutch merchants, that they knew better about the management of plantations and slaves than the planters themselves, to be quite absurd. This was the same feeling that caused so much bitterness later, when abolition and emancipation came to the front; the slave-owners did not so much object to the provisions of the law, as that it amounted to a declaration of the incompetency of men, who by experience and study had learnt the character of the negro, and how to manage him. The law-makers on the contrary, knew nothing of the matter, and although no doubt actuated by laudable motives, were lacking in knowledge and discretion. The planters treated the slaves as children, and considered themselves in the right (as fathers did at the same period) when they inflicted chastisement, although it might go so far as to amount to cruelty.

Stabroek having been finally settled upon as the seat of government, new regulations were made on September 21st 1785. Many of the original grantees, not having complied with the condition of building houses on their lots, had them confiscated and given to others. It was now decided that all the kitchens were to be made of brick and covered with tiles, and that no house be roofed with troolies or thatch. The owners of concessions Nos. 1—26 were bound

to furnish the Commissary with two, and those of all the other lots with one negro each, to clean the canals and dams. No burials were to take place in the town, but the Company's path between *Eve Leary* and *La Bourgade* was to be used as a cemetery. No boats or other vessels were to remain in the canals longer than was necessary to discharge their cargo, and two kokers were to be erected to facilitate drainage. Poor sick whites found in the town were to be sent to the military hospital, while sick negroes whose owners were unknown, must be taken to the Yaws' house of one of the Company's plantations in *Essequebo*.\* Every person owning house or land in *Stabroek* was ordered to cut the grass and clean the trenches in front and around his property, commencing on December 18th following, and repeat the same every two months afterwards. To see that these regulations were properly carried out, and to superintend the kokers and other public works, it was decided that two Councillors should act as Commissioners, the Directeur-General and the Fiscal being appointed as such at this meeting. On the 18th of October following, it was reported in the Council, that the first white child born in *Stabroek* was the daughter of J. FRIEBELS.

The town regulations were republished again and again, like most of the orders of this period. People forgot them or became careless, having no means of consulting them, unless they had taken the trouble to make copies at the time of publication. In 1788 it was ordered that no timber should be allowed to lie on the dams of the town, and the following year, that no merchant was to keep a store elsewhere than in *Stabroek*, wood-cutters and timber merchants only being excepted. On the 8th of December 1789, tenders were asked for a new stelling, and the town had now made a fair start, having 88 houses and 780 inhabitants, in-

\* Later there was a "Yaws house" at the back of *Stabroek*, probably on the site of the present *Alms house*.

cluding 238 whites, 76 free coloured persons, and 466 slaves.

Meanwhile, the strained relations between the Council and the inhabitants continued. In a letter of September 22nd 1785, the Ten ordered every Councillor to send to the Company annually, a list of the Officers in the service of the colony, with a statement of their abilities and behaviour. The Council was at the same time ordered to send an annual list of the plantations, produce, &c.. the names of the owners, managers. &c., and the number of slaves, together with a full account of those persons who had no plantations. Whether the first part of this order was ever carried out does not appear, but the returns of plantations and produce were enforced for a long time, and gave a great deal of work to the Burgher Officers, who were bound to travel round their districts to collect the particulars.

Owing to the difficulties of their position, the Directeur-General and Council could do very little. The returns on which the head-tax of *f*6 was to be assessed, were almost entirely wanting, only a very few persons who wanted to appear on good terms with the authorities, sending in these documents. The first publication ordering them to be made, under a fine of *f*300, being neglected, a second was issued, raising the fine to *f*600, but this was also disregarded. The Fiscal was then ordered to impose the fine on five of the most influential of the obstructionists, who in answer sent him a letter. They said they had already petitioned the Directeur-General to allow matters to remain on the old footing, until the decision of the Stadtholder on their Memorial should arrive. They knew that taxes must be raised, and were quite willing to pay at the old rate, but they disputed the right of the Council to fix the head-tax at six guilders or to impose the fine. They did not think themselves justified in paying either. Instead of

trying to make peace, the action of the Directeur-General only served to stir up strife. They had received the citations, but did not think them of any importance, neither troubling themselves nor losing their tempers. They proposed to let the matter stand and were not afraid. They did not want any disturbance, but if this should be the result, they would place it to the account of those who forced the matter.

An extraordinary meeting of the Council was called on the 28th of November 1785, to consider this letter. The Directeur-General thought it impertinent, as it contained threatening language, and was in his opinion treasonable. They ought to have appealed to the Council, instead of which they had sent to the Fiscal, as if he had been able to decide. To maintain their dignity they were bound to take notice of it, besides, it threatened danger to the colony. In his opinion the Fiscal should proceed to execution on the property of the delinquents, and not allow himself to be frightened from his duty. Fiscal MEEBENS thought that if Messrs. ALBINUS, SANCHEVEL, HAERTSINCK and JONAS, could only be made to pay, the other planters would soon follow their example. On consideration, the Council decided not to incur the responsibility of further action until they received instructions from the Company.

On account of the difficulty in procuring funds, the administration almost came to a stand-still. The income of the colony was comparatively little without the head-tax, so that the officials hardly got enough to pay current expenses, while the Company was in much the same position, although it was able to secure the duties on produce shipped. Hardly any attempt was made to carry out the elaborate plan of 1783, so that the system of government became a laughing-stock to the inhabitants. The late Secretary, J. ANDRIESEN, in the absence of the Directeur-General and Secretary in Essequibo, and the Fiscal in Martinique,

in 1787 acted in all these offices, in addition to those he held already, which were Assistant (Secretary's Clerk) Receiver *ad interim*, Commissary of the *Truin & Vivres ad interim* and Councillor. This led to the following doggerel lines in English being privately circulated throughout the colony:—

“ I think it best that I resign ;  
 The Company is in deep decline ;  
 Each different office I have tried,  
 There's none of them to be envied ;  
 From Governor to Secretary,  
 Fiscal, Receiver, Commissary ;  
 Each place oppression must maintain ;  
 A horrid method bread to gain !  
 Quit a mock Council, turn a Planter,  
 No longer be the Country's banter,  
 Oblivion then a veil will cast  
 On all my Follies that are past.”

The multitude of petitions, memorials and protests, from Demerara and Essequibo, to the Ten, the States General and the Stadtholder, praying for redress of the grievances of which the inhabitants had to complain, led to much correspondence, which ended in the appointment of a Committee, consisting of delegates from their High Mightinesses and the Ten. This Committee, after many sittings in 1786, in which the whole system of the Company was thoroughly investigated, drew up on the 19th of March 1787 a report to the States General, which embodied the well known Plan of Redress. It was obviously intended as the foundation for a Charter, but on account of a revolution in the Netherlands, and later, the war with France, it never became more than a project. The Deputies submitted their *Concept Plan* of Redress to the serious consideration of their High Mightinesses, flattering themselves that if it received their approval, the form of government of the two rivers would be placed on a sound footing, to the satisfaction of the inhabitants and the benefit of the

colony. They however submitted for consideration, whether it would not be better to adopt it provisionally and await the results, at the same time giving orders to the Company, that should the colonists wish it to be altered in any way and give weighty reasons for the change, their High Mightinesses would be willing, after due consideration, to make such alterations as they thought necessary. This Plan they thought should be carried out at once, so that it might have a fair trial. They did not go so far as to think that this would be sufficient to overcome all the dissatisfaction in the colony as long as the head-tax and other imposts were not put on a proper footing. They found themselves compelled to call the attention of their High Mightinesses to certain facts (which they quoted) with regard to the head-tax, concluding with the Resolution of the Ten, of the 30th of September 1784, when it was fixed at £6 for labourers and at higher rates for house servants. This last resolution had caused great dissatisfaction, as might be seen by the number of petitions against it, with the result that for the years 1784 to 1786 no taxes had been paid in the colony, although the inhabitants had offered to pay them on the old footing. They had considered the difficulty of fixing this matter equitably, with a full knowledge of the circumstances, as to the capabilities of the planters and the flourishing state of the colony, on the one side, and on the other, the fact that the taxes should once for all be fixed on a sound basis, and thought it reasonable also to take into account the heavy losses of the planters during the late war, from which considerations they had concluded that the State should contribute for the defence of the colony what might be found deficient in the revenue. They did not think it desirable to advise the remission of the head-taxes for a year, as asked for by the colonists, but rather that the usual tax of £2.10 be collected for the past years, in instalments, two years at one time, while

the Colonial tax should be imposed as before by representatives of the inhabitants.

The deputies could not omit to represent to their High Mightinesses two matters which they considered to merit particular attention, the one being the desirability of communication between the two rivers by a canal or public road, the other, the export of heavy timbers from the colony, these being, they understood, very suitable for ship-building and sea defences.

Before concluding they took the liberty of saying that, as the good administration of Policy and Justice in the colonies had the greatest influence on their prosperity, as well as on the welfare of the Republic, the laws should be based, as far as possible, on those of the Mother Country, taking into account the situation and climate of the colonies, the manners, customs, and means of their inhabitants, and their great distance from the Sovereign. The subordinate government should constantly guard against oppression, and be regulated by proper laws, both criminal and civil, the officials and servants of Justice being also regulated, so that extravagance and immorality would be kept in check, and the rights of humanity in regard to slaves, be upheld in such a manner, that the natural freedom of the inhabitants should not be interfered with more than was necessary to preserve order in the community, in a word, to preserve the rights of the Mother Country, which by her mildness, simplicity and equity, encouraged strangers to place themselves under her protection. A code of laws for all the colonies in the West Indies was yet wanting, and it appeared to them to be so necessary, that they considered it their duty to implore their High Mightinesses to attend to this important matter, as had been done by other nations suggesting that they might ask the High Court of Justice of Holland and Zeeland to formulate a plan for such a code.

In its general scope the Plan of Redress was similar to



the regulations in force before the war, differing however considerably in its details. Demerara, as the most important of the two rivers, was to be the seat of Government, and the place where *the one* Council of Policy was to hold its sessions. Essequibo was to retain her Court of Justice, but it was a moot question whether even that should be kept up as a separate institution. The subordinate Commandeur of Essequibo was to be retained, and the Council of Policy was to consist of the Directeur-General, Commandeur of Essequibo, Fiscal of Demerara and Fiscal of Essequibo, with two colonists from each river. The Court of Justice in each river was to consist of six colonists, that in Demerara being under the presidency of the Directeur-General, and in Essequibo under the Commandeur. The College of Kiesheers of Essequibo was to be retained, with the addition of two members, making seven, and a similar College established in Demerara, to replace the Burgher Officers, who had formerly acted in the same capacity. The greatest alteration was in the period of service of the colonial Councillors of Policy. Instead of being elected for life, the senior member was to retire every two years, his successor being appointed by election of the Council from a double number of nominations, while an entirely new Council was to be elected at first, by lot.

The project for a constitution was hailed by the colonists as a victory, due entirely to their stubborn opposition, and pleased them very much, while the Company, on the contrary put every obstacle in its way. Notwithstanding that it had been recommended to be put in force at once as a trial, nothing was done, but L'ESPINASSE and his *pretended* Council still sat and made laws for the two rivers, which were ignored or evaded as far as possible. On the 23rd of February 1787, a Publication was issued, ordering every boat to go alongside the man-of-war on entering or leaving

the river, or they would be fired at with ball, and also directing that no vessel, great or small, should enter or go out after sunset. This being ignored, it was renewed on August the 28th following, and again the next year.

The colonists waited month after month for the introduction of the new constitution, but, getting disgusted with the state of affairs, they on October 2nd, 1787, forwarded a protest to the Directeur-General and Fiscal, whom they considered the only properly constituted authorities in the two rivers. They found themselves compelled, most respectfully, but at the same time powerfully and earnestly, to bring to their notice that it was an irrefutable truth, that when the inhabitants of a colony received no answer to their petitions from their rulers, or any redress of the grievances of which they had complained, they were at liberty to establish such order as was necessary, to prevent the confusion that naturally followed the absence of a proper government. If this right could not be denied, then there were no people anywhere more fully justified in doing this than they. The Company had thought fit to throw over the constitution of the Colony, and it had been the duty of free-born subjects to oppose such an arbitrary proceeding. Not being enemies to the government they had proposed that those Councillors, who had been legally chosen, should be allowed provisionally to sit in the Council, but far from being listened to, they had received a shameful repulse, which if they had resented as it deserved, might have led to deplorable results. Not being intimidated however, they offered to pay the taxes on the old footing, and were referred to the Directors. Accordingly they had applied to them, but these Directors were as little accommodating as their Directeur-General, and, not even to prevent disorder, would they deign to make any appointments. In the meanwhile they had applied to the States General for redress, who, in the usual manner, referred to the Directors

for report. Had they as in duty bound, out of respect to the wishes of the inhabitants, as well as to those of their High Mightinesses, sent a speedy answer, "to-day, or perhaps long ago," a proper government would have been introduced. But no, they waited eleven months before they sent in their answer, so that it followed that the delegates could not bring in their report before the 19th of March last. From the unhappy events which had since taken place in the Republic, they were afraid that a long period would elapse before action could be taken on that report, so that no speedy settlement could be hoped for. With the exception of their Honourables, they were without any ruling authorities in these rivers, the other so-called Councillors having been assumed. They had flattered themselves that the report of the delegates would have led the Directeur-General to reconsider matters, but far from this, he, and what he called his Council, continued to pass sentences and make appointments, in which the rules of justice were infringed. Further, they had noticed the publication as to anchoring off the fort after sunset, which was issued by the Directeur-General alone, on pretence of non-session of the pretended Council, which, however, had assembled the day before and that following. This, they considered an attempt at despotism, as the preamble said "for reasons, us thereunto moving." Meanwhile even before this *beautiful* publication was known, they fired with shot and detained all the boats until next day, although none had arrived after sunset. From these actions it appeared to them that the Directeur-General imagined them wanting in spirit, or careless, and thought them willing to lay their necks upon the block of despotic tyranny. They had therefore considered it right for their own justification, as well as their duty to their descendants, and those who might in future inhabit this beautiful colony, to ask their Honourables to put an end to that state of *no government*, in the most suitable manner.

By hastening the introduction of the new plan of government, the intention of the gentlemen deputies would be carried out, but by continuing those Councillors, who had not been considered as such by the Committee, the Directeur-General would be doing what they thought would displease the Stadtholder. In conclusion they hoped their wishes would be carried out, so as to prevent their being compelled to take action against the *pretended* Councillors, which would be unpleasant to every one.\*

How JAN L'ESPINASSE felt on reading this protest can hardly be imagined, but it is probable that he thought it very impertinent. As a servant of the Company he had no power to go beyond his instructions, but had he been a man of independent spirit like GRAVESANDE, he would no doubt have watched the course of events, and provisionally allowed what was claimed. However, he stood firm, telling the inhabitants he could do nothing but carry out his orders, so matters remained as before. One thing may be said in his favour—that he had sufficient good sense to save him from going too far, which might have originated a disturbance and forced the planters to a revolution. The slightest attempt of the Fiscal to make a seizure for taxes would no doubt have brought matters to a crisis, but he remained passive, and perhaps by this saved the colony from a catastrophe.

The report of the Committee, with the proposed plan of Redress, was brought before the States General in 1788, and referred to the Stadtholder to take what action he thought desirable. Accordingly, he appointed two Commissioners, WILLEM AUGUST VAN SIETIMA, Baron VAN GROVESTINS, and WILLIAM CORNELIS BOEY, to proceed to Demerara and other colonies, with full power to make the necessary changes in the governments, appoint and dismiss officials, administer oaths, and do everything necessary to

\* *Briefven Aristodemus en Sincerus.*

restore harmony, peace and concord, in the colonies. This was dated December 25th 1788, and on the arrival of the Commissioners in Demerara published May 26th 1789.

The inhabitants were much pleased at the result of their long struggle, and the Commissioners immediately set to work to enquire into all the matters in dispute. L'ESPINASSE was allowed to resign, being provisionally succeeded by ALBERTUS BAKKER on the 18th of August, several other changes having been made before this. The new Council, under the Plan of Redress, sat for the first time on the 29th of May of the same year, JOSEPH BOURDA being one of its Members.

The Commissioners left Demerara in August, taking with them the late Directeur-General, and on their arrival in the Netherlands, reported very unfavourably of the Company, as may be supposed. The Company could not carry out the recommendations of the States General in a satisfactory manner for want of funds, its expenses continually increasing, while profits became less and less. It was heavily in debt, and had paid no dividends for many years, while its creditors were clamouring for payment and asking the States General to interfere. The trouble in Demerara and Essequibo had been the "last straw", and when, in view of the expiration of its Charter at the end of 1791, the Ten applied to the States General for a renewal, they were quietly told that this would not be granted. The Directors and shareholders protested, but it was no use. The States General took over the liabilities and gave the shareholders Government Bonds bearing three per cent interest, to the amount of thirty per cent of the face value of their shares.

At last the two rivers were free, and there was general rejoicing in the colony when a Proclamation was made on the 1st of January 1792, that the Company was dead, and in future Demerara and Essequibo would be governed by

the state. All these disputes had not tended to promote the welfare of the colony, but nevertheless some progress had been made in Demerara. Essequibo had lost its Council in 1786, and although Baron MEYERHELM had been appointed Commandeur in 1789, and the separate Court of Justice retained, this river never afterwards became of much importance. Fort Zeelandia was allowed to go to decay; its inhabitants tried their best to keep up the little capital, but it dwindled more and more every year. The Post at Morocco was however retained, one of the matters before the last meeting of the Council of Essequibo being a report that some Spaniards had captured a few Indians in the district and that they intended to come to the Post and steal Mr. GARDNER'S schooners. On this it was resolved to send an officer and sixteen men, with as many more as could be spared from Demerara to strengthen the Post. There was a revolt of slaves in 1785, and continued trouble with runaways to the Orinoco. Disputes often took place between the inhabitants of Essequibo and the Spaniards, as to the rights of either to hunt for runaways in the district between Amacura and Pomeroon, the latter searching for Indians who escaped from what was virtually slavery, although not called so.

On account of the disorganised state of affairs, desertion of slaves became more and more frequent, and camps of bush negroes caused a great deal of trouble to the planters. At a Meeting of the Council, June 17th 1789, a letter from B. NUGENT of Pln. Rome was read. He stated that he had sent a negro man, who seemed to be a sensible fellow, to THOMAS NUGENT of Belvédere (now a part of *Pln. Providence*). The slave told him that he and his brother lost their way in the bush and came upon two houses, one large and the other small. They saw ducks and fowls round the houses, and from general appearances, believed these huts were inhabited by a dozen negroes. The earth had been raised

so that the floors were dry. On peeping in they heard a bell ring above their heads, as they supposed by a spring, thus giving an alarm, and looking up, they saw the little bell hung in a tree. Two strange negroes at once challenged them, and they ran away. The negroes of Belvédere said they often saw runaways aback of Peter's Hall, and that there was a fellow there who had been out for many years, who was captain of a gang and was always at enmity with Mr. BIRMINGHAM'S (*Rome*) negroes. Mr. NUGENT also remembered that fifteen years before, a negro belonging to Peter's Hall, was killed with a lance by people of the same description. Some days before he had occasion to send some negroes into the woods to cut nibbies (bush ropes), and on their return, at night, they happened to come upon a camp of bush negroes, who attempted to stop them, on which they threw down their bundles and ran away as fast as they could. It had been reported to him that the camp was not more than a hundred and fifty yards from Mr. CHANGUION'S back dam (*Velser Hoofd*, now *Eccles*.) The runaways must have been long settled there, as he heard they had well-built houses, and a quantity of small stock, such as ducks and fowls. The Council decided to send a party of Indians to capture or kill them if possible.

The whole line of coast, from the Abary on the east almost to the Pomeroon in the west had been granted by the end of 1791, most of the concessions in Mahaicony and a number on the West Coast of Essequibo, being given in 1790. It was resolved on the 5th of June 1790, that in future, a fee of 725 should be exacted for each concession, besides the usual costs of survey &c. In 1790, the proprietors of plantations were required to forward their Land-Briefs to the Secretary's Office to be registered, and in future, it was also ordered, that the same documents be produced when passing transports. The regulations for roads and bridges had been published several times, but

as yet were only partially complied with. The roads appear to have been only grassy bridle paths, which was all that was wanted, as there were no carriages, and goods were always carried by water. In very wet weather they would have been almost impassable, if there had been much traffic, but generally they were in the condition of an ordinary estates' dam of the present day. Regulations were made as to strays, the owners being subject to a fine of five and a half guilders, and after warning the owners three times the animals might be shot. In 1791, it was decided that the ten years' freedom of taxes on new concessions should be abolished. The town of Stabroek had improved a little, and in 1791, a lamplighter was appointed at *f*15 per month, and two Town Constables, at salaries of *f*500 each per annum, with free clothing. In July 1790, GERTRUYT VAN DER MEY, a widow, was banished from the colony for immorality and setting a bad example. The Dutch were very strict in these matters; kept mistresses or coloured housekeepers were almost universal, but beyond this, looseness was discountenanced. In 1790, it was ordered that all persons desirous of marrying must pay the Receiver *f*100, and the Predicants were ordered not to perform the ceremony, unless the receipt was first shown to them.

Under the Plan of Redress no provision had been made for paying the Councillors, which those from Essequibo considered a grievance, and in 1790 they asked for some remuneration, but this was refused. The boarding-house had not been kept up, so that it was very inconvenient for them in the absence of inns. This was remedied shortly afterwards and the Colony House established, where all the Councillors were boarded and lodged during the session.

It was decided in 1791 that a Church, parsonage and house for the sexton should be erected or bought, but this does not appear to have been carried out, service being



still held in the Council Hall. The inhabitants of Mahaica petitioned for a Church about the same time, and asked for the services of the Predicant of Demerara. On December 12th, of the same year, J. M. SUYK, sexton, school-master, beadle, and undertaker, reported the necessity for a proper burial ground. He had been lately obliged to bury on the side dam of La Bourgade, and he found very great difficulty in transporting the dead by land, in wet weather. He asked that the east end of the town be granted as a burial ground, and also said he wanted a negro to help in sweeping the Church. It was resolved to give him a punt to carry the dead by water, and the negro boy to help him, but the matter of the burying ground was left for further consideration.

It was resolved in October 1791, to subsidise a Mail to Berbice and Surinam, and to establish a ferry over the Demerara river, that established under the French rule appearing to have been given up when LONCQ's Post Office was replaced by the old system.

In 1791, a printing press was imported into the colony by J. C. DE LA COSTE, and on the 3rd of December of that year an Official Notice of the dates of the Meetings of the Courts for 1791, was printed. Several other printed Publications appeared in 1791, but for some reason or other the office was closed in the latter end of that year, and the old system of written notices resumed. The latest of those printed at that time is dated October 4th 1791, that, as well as the others, being very creditable productions.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### *THE "TWO RIVERS" UNDER STATE CONTROL, 1792—1796.*

Alterations and improvements—War with France—Arrival of Governor Grovestins—Preparations for defence—Disputes as to the disposal of the Colonial Taxes—Essequebo of secondary importance—Stabroek—Sanitary condition of the colony—Publications—The first newspaper and postal delivery—Progress—Warning against French ideas—Fall of the Dutch Republic—Alliance with France against England—Arrival of H.M.S. Zebra—The Council refuse to put the colony under British protection—The Governor leaves quietly in the Zebra—Alarm and confusion in the town—Burghers meet and resolve to alter the constitution—New administration—Arrival of a British fleet—Authorities refuse to admit them—They leave without interfering—Rioting among the negroes—Expedition to the back of the West Coast—Suppression of the riot—New Government comes to end—Beaujon appointed Governor—First Financial Representatives.

**W**ITH the year 1792 a new era commenced for Demerara and Essequebo. By the fall of the Company the colony came under the control of the State, which appointed a Colonial Council to superintend this and other colonies. No changes were made in the administration for the first year, the officials remaining until the new arrangements could be completed, meanwhile taking a new oath of allegiance to the States General. The Company's seal was however at once abandoned, and two new ones ordered, with monograms of C.E. and C.D. On the 9th of April, several men-of-war arrived, bringing news that soldiers to garrison the colony were coming, and on the 30th it was proposed by Lieut.-Col. SPENGLER, to detach a hundred and twenty men to the posts Coerabanna, Mahaica, Boeraserie, Leguan and Morocco. There being

no proper barracks anywhere, building operations were energetically commenced, and every effort made to provide for the accommodation of the expected garrison. Fort William Frederick being out of repair, it was resolved to put it in such order that it could be a place of refuge for women and children in case of invasion, of which there were great fears, on account of the relations of the Netherlands with France. The Military hospital was examined and found able to accommodate thirty to forty patients; a guilder a day was allowed for poor patients, and the bill for medicines had amounted to f139,213 for the last year, which the acting Governor thought exorbitant.

On the first of February 1793, the French National Convention considered a "Report on the Hostilities of the King of England and the Stadtholder of the United Provinces," after which it was declared that the Republic was at war with both, the latter because of "his servile devotion to the orders of the Cabinet of St. James." This was followed by a Proclamation of the French General DUMOURIER, calling on the "Batavians" to assert their rights against the Stadtholder. It was not against them, he stated, that the French nation had declared war; "friends of all nations, France had only tyrants for enemies." Thus began a war which was destined to produce serious results or the Dutch colonies in Guiana.

The probability of war was discussed in Demerara by the Council on the 17th of March 1793, when rumours were reported of an invasion from Cayenne, and on the 31st of the same month arrived WILLEM AUGUST VAN SIETIMA, BARON VAN GROVESTINS, who had been appointed Governor of the two rivers. He was cordially welcomed by the inhabitants, who appreciated his services on the late Commission. A resolution was immediately passed, that a Court Martial should be held, to decide on the measures necessary for the defence of the colony, and, on

the following day, the Governor paid a visit of inspection to the East Coast. Cruisers were to be stationed off Abary to give notice of the approach of the enemy from Cayenne, and the inhabitants petitioned for convoy and a safe anchorage for their trading vessels. This petition was considered on the 12th, when Lieut.-Colonel SPENGLER recommended, in the absence of convoy, that the merchant vessels should be disguised as men-of-war, so as to make an appearance of force. At the same meeting, it was officially announced that war had been declared, and resolved that produce should be shipped in neutral vessels, also that a battery be erected at Coerabanna. On the 30th of April, it was decided to purchase the house at Eve Leary for a barracks, and next day a building for a post at Coerabanna. In the same month it was resolved to procure an American frame house 86 ft. by 36 ft., for a barracks, and to buy two telescopes at £100 each for Mahaica and Coerabanna. As usual, there was no cash in the Chest, and it was therefore decided in July, that paper money should be issued. Lieut.-Colonel SPENGLER wanted to leave with the Frigate *Alliance*, but on the representations of the Council, he agreed to postpone his departure. In May, it was decided that the merchant vessels should go to Barbados and put themselves under the protection of the British convoy. The people were very enthusiastic, and the English planters went hand in hand with the Dutch, not even objecting to an extraordinary head-tax of ten guilders.

Nothing having been heard of the enemy however, the alarm and enthusiasm soon subsided, and the Council set to work to reorganize the colony, and make such alterations as were rendered necessary by the change of government. The planters accepted the Plan of Redress, but were not entirely satisfied with the way in which the Colonial Taxes had been applied. They considered that these were free contributions on their part, that they should be used only

for extraordinary purposes, and accounted for in full. Otherwise, no radical changes were considered necessary, they being inclined to abide by the constitution gained after such hard struggle. The office of Directeur-General was replaced by that of Governor, while ALBERTUS BACKER returned to his post as Commandeur of Essequibo. Some doubts were expressed as to the necessity for keeping up the government offices at Fort Zeelandia; it was even proposed to establish a new capital at Leguan, but as many objections were made no change took place. The duties of the Commandeur were not very onerous, as beyond the presidency of the Court of Justice, he merely carried out the orders of the Governor and Council, of which latter he was necessarily a member.

Stabroek had advanced so far as to require a market, which was held on the middle dam in front of the Church, which was the lower floor of the Court house, as no proper church had yet been built. In 1793, it was resolved to remove the market to Concession No. 27, facing the house of Mr. SUTHERLAND, near the hospital, probably not far from what is now the Catholic Cathedral. It was held on Sundays, and the slaves were allowed to sell the produce of their gardens, such as yams, sweet potatoes, eddoes, &c., as well as live stock, and, if their masters gave special permission, plantains. Slaves, as well as free black and coloured people, were prohibited from selling dry goods. There were no regular butchers, and the residents found it difficult to obtain fresh meat, unless some of their planter friends sent them a joint now and then. When an ox or sheep was to be killed it was usual to send a negro round with an open letter, asking what portions of the meat were required.

Smallpox was reported as prevalent in the colony in 1792, but there does not seem to have been anything like yellow fever until 1796. Under the plantation system, the colony

appears to have been generally healthy, and although the negroes did not increase otherwise than by fresh importations, this is easily accounted for by the fact that women were brought in comparatively small numbers. Up to this time it appears that free negroes and coloured people were compelled to pay the head-tax, but in January 1793, the free coloured *men* (but not the women) were exempted, on condition that they should be always ready to take part in bush expeditions. The same year, the Burgher Captains, LONOQ and TAPPIN, made a general raid on the Bush Negroes, in which they were successful in capturing a good number and destroying several camps.

The Predicant in Demerara was DOMINUS J. W. DE BRUYN, who reported in April 1793, that he had received a silver Communion Service and a new table cloth for the Church. A Church Consistory had been in existence for for some years, and the same year it was deputed to administer the Church and Poor Fund.

The want of some better means of making known the Notices and Publications of the Council now began to be felt. The primitive system of sending round two or three written notices, to be read and then passed on, was now felt to be a very imperfect way of making known the laws. With such a large number of English and French inhabitants, it must have been particularly difficult for every citizen to understand the laws, and that ignorance was often pleaded there can be no doubt, as may be seen from their frequent republication. To obviate this J. C. DE LA COSTE proposed to establish an advertising sheet, and made application to the Council of Policy on the 29th of July 1793 as follows :—

“ The petitioner, J. C. DE LA COSTE, begs humbly to intimate, that he is domiciled in the capital, Stabroek, and that he has been requested by a large number of the inhabitants of this colony, to re-establish a printing press, and to publish a weekly advertising paper.

“ The petitioner is inclined to comply with this request and establish

a press for the convenience of the public, if he can be guaranteed in the possession thereof for some years, without opposition, and if he can obtain from their Honourables of the Council an authorisation, by which all their publications and orders printed by him may be valid and of authority, this having been questioned by some parties.

“ Wherefore, your petitioner addresses himself to your Honourables, humbly requesting a favourable appointment, by virtue of which he may be permitted and authorised exclusively, for five successive years, to publish every week an advertising paper, in accordance with the annexed prospectus, in which all publications, public ordinances, regulations of the Council, and announcements of the public offices, will be printed, and at the same time that he may announce that these are published by authority of the Honourable Council; on which the petitioner would be enabled to spend the necessary capital to establish the press with some certainty of success.”

“ Prospectus of a weekly Advertising Paper :

“ The aforesaid paper will be printed on medium paper, and be published every Sunday morning, and will contain the sessions of the Council and Courts of Justice of both rivers, and the ordinances and regulations issued by them :

“ The edictal citations and execution sales of both rivers :

“ The arrivals and departures of vessels, with their cargoes and passengers :

“ The appointments and changes of all civil and military officers :

“ Inland news of what has happened during the week :

“ Reviews of the cultivations—notices of the seasons—the opening up of new land—private sales of estates—changes among the planters—happy and unlucky accidents—in, fact everything that may be of public interest : also the most noteworthy foreign political news from Europe, the West Indies and America, for which the printer is making the necessary correspondence arrangements so as to secure ample and reliable news.

“ Further, the advertising paper will contain all publications, advertisements and general notices in connection with the calling up of creditors of Boedels, departures of persons from the colony, public and private sales, and other matters interesting to the public. It will also contain the names and descriptions of the runaway slaves who may be captured and brought to the fort during the week.”

On deliberation the Council granted permission, but as they could not give an exclusive license, DE LA COSTE was referred to the Gentlemen Councillors of the West Indian Colonies, to whom the Council would give him a letter of

recommendation, and meanwhile they undertook that no other press should be permitted.

On the 20th of October following, DE LA COSTE brought a more elaborate project before the Council. Since he had received the favourable appointment, he had been making arrangements for his printing office, and had purchased the necessary negroes and materials. After submitting his project to the public, he had found the principal inhabitants favourably inclined to support him by subscribing to the paper, which he intended to bring out on the 1st of November. He had made some alterations, and had got a hundred subscribers, who approved of the amendments; he therefore forwarded it for the approval of their Honourables. He was willing to take the oath, and abide by the regulations of the Post Office, and would carry the despatches of the Courts, the Government and the Fiscal, free of charge.

The heading of the new Prospectus showed its scope. It was, "Conditions and terms for subscribers, for one year, to a weekly advertising paper, and for free postage of correspondence in Demerara." After describing the contents of the paper in similar language to that of the first prospectus, it proceeds as follows:—

"The advertising paper will be printed on a large sheet the size of the English papers :

"The publications and ordinances of the Council of Policy, of the government, and all that concerns the government and public offices, will be published in both the Dutch and English languages :

"The advertisements and notices of the public, and everything else, will be published in the languages in which they are written :

The papers will be delivered in Stabroek, early every Sunday morning, and four messengers will distribute them in the several districts of Demerara, in the manner following:—

"The messengers will depart early on Sunday morning for their respective districts :

"That for Mahaica will go as far as Mr. A. SHANKS, the ferryman, and deliver the respective parcels of the subscribers on the East Coast and Coerabanna, to Mr. LOUIS CHIGNARD, (*Plu. Tout y Manque* below *Better Hope*), Mr. J. J. LE MARCHAND (above *Amandale*), Mr. Farley on



*Pln. Marienburg*, and last to Mr. SHANKS at Mahaica, where the letters for Mahaica and Mahaicony, may be called for at Mr. SHANKS' house.

“ That for the West Sea Coast, will go as far as the Boeraserie Creek, to *Pln. De Kinderen*, and on the way will deliver the letters for the district to Mr. BOORWEEGEN at the ferry house, Mr. FISCHER at *Haarlem*, Mr. MEYER at *Anna Catharina*, and last at *De Kinderen*, where the letters and papers for Essequibo will be delivered, and the letters for Demerara received :

“ That for the East bank of the river, will go as far as *Land of Canaan*, and on the way will deliver the parcels to Mr. J. P. SLENGAARDE at *Vreed-en-Bust*, Mr. J. HASLIN at *Vriendschap*, and Mr. KEYSER at *Land of Canaan* :

“ The last messenger for the West bank of the river, will go as far as *Pln. Reynesteyn*, and on his way deliver the parcels to Mr. BOORWEEGEN at the ferry, to the Honourable Mr. JOHN DALY at *Bellevue*, and last to Mr. G. BRUMELL of *Reynesteyn*.

“ The same persons who carry the newspapers will also deliver the letters from Stabroek in the several districts, and, *vice versa*, bring those for Stabroek on their return. For this purpose they will be provided with tin canisters, and similar receptacles will be returned from each place of delivery. The respective persons to whom the canisters are delivered, will receive and deliver the letters to their addresses, and in exchange, take those for Stabroek and deliver them to the messengers on their return.

“ The messengers will leave Stabroek every Wednesday afternoon, to deliver letters in their respective districts, and return every Friday afternoon, therefore, letters will have to be posted every Wednesday morning, and Saturday afternoon, at the office in Stabroek, and the return letters will be delivered on Tuesday morning and Friday evening.

“ The subscribers to the newspaper will have their letters carried free, but other persons must pay ten stivers for each letter on its receipt, and prepay all those intended for the country districts, otherwise their letters will not be delivered, but remain in the office ; to prevent mistakes subscribers will have to sign their names on the back of their letters, otherwise they will not be forwarded, but taken as belonging to strangers.

To encourage this useful undertaking, the projector has humbly petitioned His Excellency, who has been pleased to grant the request, that the Captains of all vessels arriving from foreign parts, be bound to deliver their letters at the office, which will be distributed free to subscribers, but to others, at five stivers each for Stabroek, and ten for the other districts ; and further, that all Captains on leaving

(except for the Mother Country) be required to call at the office to receive the letters for their place of destination. For this purpose, tickets will be given them gratis at the office, to deliver at the Fort, without which they will not be allowed to depart. By this the correspondence with the Islands, and with the Mother Country through the Islands, will be regulated.

“ The subscription to the paper, and free postage for one year will be £55 for each subscriber, of which £33 are to be paid at once, and the balance on the 1st of May 1794, to pay which latter the subscribers will have to bind themselves by their signatures.

“ An accurate account and correspondence will be kept with the Post Office at Barbados, where the undersigned will always keep sufficient money to pay the postage on all English and Dutch letters intended for this colony, and will have them forwarded here without delay.”

On deliberation the Council approved of the plan, and authorised him to carry it out, except that the Captains should not be compelled to deliver their letters to the office, as those to their consignees and others might be delivered personally. While agreeing that it was desirable that the letters should all be sent to the office, they did not care to offend the merchants by making it compulsory.

A year later DE LA COSTE forwarded another petition, asking that the Council would compel the Captains to send their letters to his Post Office. He had carried out his project for a year, and so far succeeded that no complaints had been made. However it had sometimes happened, that after the arrival of a vessel, persons had sent to him for letters, when none had been delivered to him by the Captain. On the other hand, persons trusting in the office, had sent letters to him to be despatched to North America and other places, and had been disappointed on account of the Captains not calling before their departure. He had addressed himself to the Governor on several occasions, but for want of a special ordinance, nothing beyond a recommendation could be made to the Captains. On account of this difficulty, it had been his intention to abandon the Post Office at the end of the first year. This coming to the knowledge of

some of the principal inhabitants, they had persuaded him to continue, assuring him of the great necessity of such an office, and its usefulness and advantage to the people. Since its establishment the people had somewhere to send letters, and those in the country knew that if letters had come for them they would get them a short time afterwards, without the trouble of sending a special messenger. He thanked the Council for their favours, and said that their confidence and that of the inhabitants had induced him to continue, although the Post Office gave him no profit. What with the messengers, the eighteen distribution offices and the one in Stabroek, where he had to employ a clerk, the Office cost as much as the postage, or perhaps a little more. It was therefore only for the benefit of the public, that he now petitioned the Council to make an order compelling all Captains to bring and call for letters, on arriving and before their departure. If an Ordinance were passed he would print it in Dutch and English, and deposit a number of copies at the Fort for free distribution.

The Council on deliberation, would not however agree to do more than recommend the matter to the consideration of His Excellency the Governor.

In March 1795, the matter of the Post Office came again before the Council, Mr. DE LA COSTE having communicated to the Governor, that on account of the death of his partner, ANDRIES BEAUJON, he had been obliged to resume the practice of his profession of Attorney-at-law, and asked to be allowed to hand over the Post Office to NICHOLAS VOLKEBETS, which was agreed to. In October following DE LA COSTE informed the Council that he intended to discontinue his newspaper at the end of the month, when the subscriptions expired, and close his Office, he therefore returned the provisional license to their Honourables, with thanks. Thus the first Post Office and newspaper were

discontinued, and two useful institutions fell to the ground.

It does not appear that any copies of this paper are in existence, and its name is even uncertain. The publisher speaks of it in general terms as an *advertentie blad* or *courant*, and it is most probable that it went by one of these names, possibly "Courant van Demerary." Although nominally an official publication, nothing was paid by the government towards its support, the publisher being even reminded in October 1794, that he was bound to insert *all* official publications, ordinances, &c., gratis without abbreviation.

Demerara was advancing rapidly at this time. With the necessity for protecting the colony against an expected invasion, which could only be done by having communication all along the coast, the roads and bridges were put in order, and ferries established over the Demerara, Mahaica, Mahaicony and Abary. On account of the difficulty in procuring Dutch provisions, American vessels were permitted, in September 1794, to take produce in payment up to the value of their cargoes, at current rates, viz., coffee 7 st., cotton 15 st. and sugar 3 st. per lb. A great deal of business was done with Barbados as long as the English were in the position of allies, so that the strict regulations with regard to produce being shipped only to the Netherlands were necessarily allowed to remain in abeyance. Stores were now opened on Vlissengen and Werk-en-Rust, which were not however entirely approved by the authorities, as they wanted to develop Stabroek. In 1794, WILLIAM LAWRENCE asked for permission to erect a bridge, at his own expense, to connect Werk-en-Rust with Stabroek, which was granted. An inn had been opened in the town, and permission was granted to Mr. CART to open another at Mahaica. Notwithstanding the difficulties connected with the war, and the critical state of the Netherlands, the produce shipped in 1794 amounted to double that of the most prosperous year of the Company.

In July 1794, a despatch was received from the Council of the Colonies, warning the Governor and Council against the French ideas of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity," and urging the maintenance of peace and order. In April previous, the Council had already decided to refuse their permission for French refugees to settle in the colony, and also ordered that every inhabitant should take the oath of allegiance to the Netherlands. Two Frenchmen reported about the same time, that Cayenne was in a defenceless state, and might be easily captured, but as the authorities had enough to do in looking after their own measures to preserve Demerara, they could not think of acting in the aggressive. Fort William Frederick was much injured by the sea, while most of the guns at Fort Zeelandia were found, on inspection, to be useless.

Towards the end of the year 1794, the French successes in the Netherlands had brought matters to an alarming crisis. For some time past the people had become divided, and the disasters of the army under the Stadtholder tended more and more to develop favourable opinions of the revolutionary party. In December 1794, all hopes to preserving the Netherlands appear to have been lost, and the English contingent, which had hitherto been helping the Dutch, abandoned the country. The revolutionary party then came to the front, and the Stadtholder found it necessary, for the safety of himself and his son, to proceed to England. Overtures were then made to the French General PICHGRU, who, on the 20th January 1795, made his entry into Amsterdam. Then followed an entire abrogation of the old constitution, the office of Stadtholder being abolished, and a new government established on the lines of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

The news of the restoration of friendly relations with France was published in Demerara on the 27th of April 1795, and ship Captains were at once cautioned to beware

of the English, and not to venture on their voyage, except under Dutch or French convoys. The Council immediately resolved not to admit any but French and Dutch vessels, so that communication with Barbados was at once cut off. As the colony was considered unable to defend itself, it was also decided, that in case an enemy of superior force should arrive, it would be useless to make a show of resistance, but rather endeavours made to obtain the best possible terms. The fort could easily be attacked from behind as there were plenty of places where an enemy could land, which not five times the number of troops in the colony could prevent. Even two well-armed privateers could easily pillage the estates, without their being able to do anything. Nothing less than a squadron of men-of-war could prevent an invasion, while they only had one small vessel, the *Thetis*. The Georgetown Militia were called out, and a house bought for their accommodation, but Burgher Captain FILERN reported that some of them were very unwilling to perform their duties. Captain SWANKE of the Mahaica Post, complained of vessels sailing in and out of the creek without showing their colours, and stated that he had no means of stopping them. The number of soldiers in the whole colony amounted to 334, distributed in the fort and new barracks, Fort Zeelandia, and the different posts.

On the 3rd of May 1795, the British man-of-war *Zebra* arrived from Barbados, bringing despatches from General VAUGHAN and Vice-Admiral CALDWELL, addressed to the Governors of Essequibo, Demerara, Surinam, and Berbice, informing them that, at the request of His Highness the Prince of Orange, who was then in England, six hundred English troops were being sent to reinforce the colony. At the same time a letter was delivered to the Governor from the Prince, dated Kew, February 7th 1795, which ran as follows:—

“ We have thought it necessary by these, to command you, in Deme-

rara as well as Essequibo, to admit the forces which may be sent there by His Britannic Majesty; and, in the rivers, such men-of-war, frigates, or other armed vessels, as may be sent there by His Majesty of Great Britain, and to consider them as forces and vessels of a power in friendship and alliance with their High Mightinesses the States General of the United Netherlands, coming there to prevent the colony from being invaded by the French."

The order having been seriously considered by the Council, it was resolved that, under the circumstances, they could not obey the commands of the Prince, because their High Mightinesses had officially informed them of the restoration of friendship between France and the Netherlands.

The Governor was a partisan of the Prince, but being in the minority, did not care to remain in the colony where he might perhaps have to fight against his friends, he therefore went quietly on board the *Zebra* on the evening of the 5th, after which she sailed for Martinique.

In the then state of the colony, this action of the Governor caused a great deal of alarm, as it was considered by many respectable inhabitants, in the light of desertion to the enemy. French Republican ideas had been spreading through the colony for some months past, almost every one taking the side of one or the other party, and flaunting either the Orange or Tricolor cockade. The feeling here was as strong as in the Netherlands, where the French party gave their opinion of the conduct of the Prince, as follows, in their Manifesto against Great Britain:—

"But what puts the seal to the acts of hostility and bad faith, which the present British Ministers have exercised against this republic, is the treacherous mode in which they have endeavoured to make themselves masters of her colonies. For this purpose they sent letters, signed by the Prince of Orange, and dated at Kew the 7th of February 1795, to several of the colonies of the republic of the Netherlands in the East Indies, and the Cape of Good Hope. In these letters, this perfidious and *ci-devant* Minister and Commander-in-Chief of these States, after having abandoned all his posts, ordered, on his own individual authority, the respective governors to put the colonies of the "States" under the protection of the British arms; that is to say, in the artful and

customary language of the English ministry, to surrender them to England."

The day following, (May 6th) the acting Fiscal reported his having received a letter from the Governor, acquainting him with the necessity for his sudden departure, and asking him to administer the civil government, while Captain VAN WELL, he said, might take charge of the military affairs. A letter from the Governor was then read, dated H.M.S. *Zebra* May 5th, informing the Council of his departure for Martinique, wishing the colony much prosperity, and advising them to open the secret despatches for their guidance; at the same time he forwarded an account of the cash in the Colony Chest. On opening the first secret despatch it was found that in case of the Governor's death, or absence, the States General directed that ALBERTUS BAKKEE should act as Governor *ad interim*. BAKKEE not being in the colony, the second despatch was opened, where it was found that ANTONY BRAUJON was to act in the absence of the other two. BRAUJON excused himself on the plea of ill-health and weakness, and when pressed to accept the office, absolutely refused.

The Council hardly knew how to act under the circumstances, and the inhabitants, seeing the necessity of doing something, as any day might bring a British fleet to conquer the colony, became clamorous. On the 8th of May Stabroek was in an uproar, and mob law became the order of the day. Tricolor cockades were sported by the majority of the young planters, while the Orange party led by P. H. KOPPIERS, the late Governor of Berbice, showed enough spirit to prevent the Republicans having everything their own way. The mob assembled before the Secretary's office and demanded possession, declaring they wanted to secure all the valuable documents, to prevent their being destroyed or carried off. The Receiver, MATTHIAS TINNE, went among them, and succeeded in pacifying the mob so far as to avert an attack, after which they paraded up and down



the Brick Dam, shouting "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity." A shoemaker named HENNING ran about like a madman, bawling "Justice must be done! Some must be hanged!" A mulatto woman named NANNY WOOD also tried to rouse the negroes, calling them cowards not to revenge themselves on their masters; she would avenge *herself* and choose her time.

On account of the absence of any supreme authority, no action was taken against the rioters, but the Burghers becoming alarmed, met together at a coffee house and passed a number of resolutions, with which a deputation of four waited on the Council on the 9th. In the name of Liberty Equality and Fraternity, they declared the government to be overthrown on account of the desertion of GROVESTINS, and as the people would not have another Governor, the administration must be placed in the hands of the Councillors of Policy, who, in succession, should each be President for eight days, the acting Commandeur of Essequibo, J. G. PLETTNER being the first. The Council agreed to the requisition of the Burghers, except the acting Fiscal, who, being first legal officer of the colony, could not consent to such a revolutionary proceeding, and therefore resigned. These changes were embodied in Publications of the 9th and 16th, issued in the names of J. G. PLETTNER, Commandeur *ad interim*, and A. BEAUJON, Secretary. They made known the clandestine departure of GROVESTINS, restoration of peace with France, the letter of the Prince of Orange, PLETTNER's assumption of the government, and the points of reform. Three extraordinary Councillors had been elected, Messrs. M. THIENS, D. BRETON, and L. DE MELLET, so that with the exception of the Commandeur of Essequibo the Official element was entirely excluded. In future the government would be administered for periods of eight days, by two Councillors, one from Demerara, and the other from Essequibo. The first were to be PLETTNER and

MELLETT, the second HALL and MEERTENS, the third LUYKEN and CUMING and the fourth THIERENS and BRETON, and after all of them had held office for the term, the same order would be repeated. This new administration having been established, the Burgher Militia were called out, and order restored, some of the ringleaders in the disturbance being arrested. The excitement however, had produced serious results among the slaves, which caused a great deal of trouble, as we shall see presently.

On the 27th of May Captain VAN WELL reported that three frigates and six brigs were in sight, and on the following day, two British Officers arrived at Government House under a flag of truce, with despatches addressed to the Principal Authorities and Council, the Commander of the troops and the Commander of the Naval force. The first was dated H.M.S. *Mermaid*, off Demerara May 28th, and ran as follows :—

“ His Britannic Majesty, having judged it expedient to order a force to protect the settlement of Demerary and its dependencies from the French arms (the ruling powers of France having taken possession of Holland) the undersigned Officers, commanding the British Naval and Military forces before Demerary and its dependencies, invite all persons in the above colony to place themselves under the mild protection of the British government.

“ The religion, persons and property of the inhabitants will be held sacred while they continue to manifest a friendly disposition to the British nation.

HENRY WARRE, Commander of the Naval Forces.

JOHN RITCHIE, Commander of the Troops.

The Officers having been told that an answer would be given on the morrow, the Council deliberated on the matter, and resolved that “as peace had been restored between France and the Netherlands, the government cannot and must not accept the protection of His Britannic Majesty.” It was then reported that the vessels were coming into the river, on which it was decided to prevent them by force, and fortify Stabroek as far as possible.

It may be presumed that the British Officers had no orders to capture the colony, but only to act on behalf of the Prince of Orange, in inviting the inhabitants to put themselves under British protection, as, on receiving their answer, they sailed away, to the great relief of the one party, and disappointment of the other.

Meanwhile, the behaviour of the negroes became unbearable. Having been infected with the French ideas of equal rights, they became turbulent, making friends with the bush negroes, and probably intended to raise a general insurrection. The runaways, who had been allowed to establish themselves behind most of the plantations, for want of sufficient force to dislodge or capture them, had become very troublesome, often going so far as to visit the market and sell their provisions. In April rumours of a general revolt were in circulation and the authorities of Pln. *De Kinderen* implored assistance to put down the Bush Negroes at the back of that estate. In June the West Coast was almost in a state of insurrection, and a line of posts was established from Pln. *Indissoluble* (Vreed-en-Hoop) to the Boeraserie Creek. The planters were naturally very much alarmed, some of them removing their families to town, while others on the East Coast thought seriously of sending the ladies and children to Barbados. The more judicious planters however, knowing the moral effect of making a bold stand, would not think of such a thing, but put on a careless behaviour before the negroes, only warning the overseers to be on their guard and report the least sign of insubordination. The Court of Policy ordered everyone to keep their negroes away from the back dams, and directed that all slaves found wandering about without passes should be arrested and flogged. On the 10th of June the free coloured people were ordered to register themselves within twenty-four hours, so that they might be employed in an expedition against the Bush

Negroes, while on the 7th July LOUIS DE MELLET was appointed Commander of the expedition. All the back dams on the West Coast were ordered to be opened so as to drain the savannah and facilitate the work of the party, while to induce the planters to take greater care of their slaves, compensation for those who might be executed was temporarily abolished. A large body of Indians was also collected, while from Surinam and Berbice small contingents of troops were sent at the earnest solicitations of the Court. In addition to these the plantations were required to furnish one slave for every fifty, these to be bought by the government at prices not exceeding a thousand guilders each and embodied as a Negro Corps, with the promise of freedom for good conduct. The planters found no difficulty in getting the young and able-bodied negroes to volunteer for this service, while many of the whites were eager to offer themselves for what was to them dangerous but exciting sport. A reward of four hundred guilders was offered for every Bush Negro captured alive and half the amount for a severed right hand.

From a private letter written on the 28th July by Mr. WM. PARKINSON, a planter on the East Coast, it appears that on the night of the 4th a party of about a hundred negroes attacked a plantation in No. 1 Canal, but were driven off with the loss of two or three of their number. DE MELLET tracked them the following day with a party of Indians and succeeded in capturing a few, but made little impression on them. A few nights later, with the help of a house negro they captured the house and buildings of Pln. *Windsor Forest*, killing the proprietor J. CLARKE and several other whites, after which they fired the buildings and burnt them to the ground. Several other estates were attacked but in every case the whites with a few soldiers posted on the plantation, succeeded in driving the negroes off. One poor soldier was shot while going from one post to another, but

it does not appear that any other casualties happened on the plantations.

An expedition, consisting of a party of soldiers of the regular garrison, had been sent out a few weeks before, when the reports of an intended attack were first circulated. Without Indians, and entirely ignorant of bush warfare, they were surprised and defeated by the negroes, nearly every one being killed and cut in pieces, and their head and quarters tied to trees. On account of this disaster and the consequent boldness of the negroes, stronger measures were now taken. It was decided that two parties should be sent out, the first up the Hobabo Creek, and the other aback of the West Coast, so as to surround the Bush Negroes if possible. Each party consisted of a body of Indians, fifty of the Negro Corps, a company of Burghers, and a number of gentlemen volunteers, followed by a large party of negro carriers with provisions, hammocks and other necessaries. The Indians were engaged in front and on either side as scouts and trackers, effectually preventing anything like an ambush. Past the horrible scene of the mutilation, where the divided corpses of the Dutch soldiers still polluted the air, the Indians led the parties to one Negro camp after another, where being surrounded, the runaways were mostly shot, some few escaping into the bush, and women and children taken prisoners. On the return of the expedition seventy black arms were displayed on the points of their bayonets, a horrible sight to many of the spectators, and an awful warning to negro sympathisers.

On the 19th of September, £5,500 in gold Joes were voted to the Indians for their services, and on the 28th the Governor reported the happy termination of the affair. Thanks were given to all those who had taken part in the expedition, and Major DE MELLET, as an acknowledgement for his services, was freed from taxes for ten years, while

Captains LE BLANC and VAN DER HEIDEN, were presented with £1,500 each. In December, Captain McCRAIG,\* who led the Negro corps, was presented with a gold-hilted sword, and Major DE MELLET with a gold cup, with inscriptions, while the other Officers were each presented with a land concession in the Pomeroon. Thirteen of the captured Bush negroes were broken on the wheel, while the ringleader was burnt at the stake in front of the Fiscal's Office in Stabroek, (probably near the present Police Station) with the horrible accompaniment of having his flesh pinched out with red hot tongs. All this was done in public, near the residences of some of the principal persons in Stabroek, and taken as a matter of course, although the smell of the burning flesh was said by Dr. PINCKARD to have made many persons sick and taken away their appetites for the day.

While this had been going on, the revolutionary government had come to an end, despatches having been received declaring the establishment of the Batavian Republic and appointing ANTONY BEAUJON as Governor, which were published on the 27th of June.

It was decided on the 1st of December that a house should be hired to accommodate the Colonial Councillors during the session. An arrangement was made to lease a place at £400 per annum, and Miss SARAH LYNG agreed to cater for them at the following rates, viz., breakfast £1.10, dinner £5.10, supper £2, binding herself not to lodge any but the Councillors during the session, at which time only, drinks would be paid for by the Colony.

By this time the constitution had been virtually settled on the basis of the Plan of Redress, but there had been a feeling of dissatisfaction from the first in regard to the administration of the Colonial taxes. It will be remembered that there were two sets of taxes, with the corresponding

This gentleman is said to have been at this very time, in communication with the Governor of Barbados to induce him to capture the colony for England.

“ chests,” the one formerly that of the Company, now belonging to the State, and the other, the Colony *Ongeld*. The latter had, from the commencement been imposed by general consent for special purposes, usually in emergencies, to pay for certain public benefits which the Company refused to make provision. At first, it was an extraordinary tax, imposed for one year, and then perhaps allowed to lapse for a time, but as the colony developed, it became an annual impost, varying according to the estimate of the requirements of the coming year. As the Colonial Councillors could always be overruled by the casting vote of the Governor, the colonists now complained that a number of expenses were paid from the Colony Chest which should have been provided for from that of the State. From the private instructions of Governor GROVESTINS it appears that he was authorised, if necessary, to add to the number of Colonial Councillors when new taxes were brought forward. It was proposed to assume two members of the College of Kiesheers for this purpose, and the Governor wrote to the Colonial Council in 1794 asking for instructions, but on account of the state of affairs in the Netherlands the matter remained in obedience for some time. On the 12th of January 1795 however, the Governor stated that he had received instructions to examine, with the College of Kiesheers, as to whether any further charges could be made on the Colonial fund, but nothing was done at this meeting. Then came the revolution and establishment of what may be called the Demerara Republic, after which very heavy expenses were incurred in suppressing the insurrection. In providing the necessary sum it was thought desirable to consult with the Kiesheers, it being decided on June 23rd 1795 that two from each of the Colleges should be added to the Council to superintend the raising of the Colonial taxes. This arrangement was confirmed by Governor BEAUJON, and at a later period developed into the Financial College.

The views of the Councillors may be seen from the following extract from their memorial against the abolition of this privilege June 10th 1796 :—

“In Governor GROVESTINS’ instructions the superintendance of the Colony fund is not to be left to the sole care of the Colonial Councillors, but a greater number of colonists, *e.g.* the Kiesheers shall be adjoined. They were also justified by expediency and justice, since in the present constitution the inhabitants have almost no influence. For example, the Governor by his casting vote, can impose any Capitation tax against the protests of the Colonial representatives, who might consider a less tax sufficient. The necessity of this may be seen by the new charges imposed under GROVESTINS, some of which were paid by the Receiver without authority, or being even deliberated on by the Court. Nor can this statement be invalidated by saying that public servants will not undertake things against the interests of the Colony. Experience shows this: some public servants who differed from Governor GROVESTINS have been reprimanded by him and complained of to their High Mightinesses. It also often happens that foreigners are sent here as Officials, and through ignorance, commit many errors.”



## CHAPTER XVII.

### *SLOW PROGRESS OF BERBICE, 1781—1796.*

Capture by British and French—Land concessions made free—Contemporary account of improvements under the French—Return to Dutch rule—Land concessions of British and French revoked—New Amsterdam removed to present site—Governor Koppiers dismissed and succeeded by Van Batenburg—Grants of land on the coast—Van Batenburg's character—Why Berbice was so far behind Demerara—Government and defence assumed by the State—The capital in 1796.

**T**HE news of the capture of Demerara by the British privateers in 1781 arrived in Berbice early in March, and Governor KOPPIERS made preparations for defence, calling the soldiers from the outposts to Forts Nassau and St. Andries. Before any proper arrangements could be made however, two privateers appeared before Fort St. Andries, on the 6th of March, which not being surrendered at once, they attacked, captured and burnt, and then proceeding up the river toward Fort Nassau, took the estates' boats and any vessels that came in their way. As soon as the King's Officers had made their arrangements in Demerara, an emissary was sent to Berbice, when the colony was rescued from the privateers on similar terms to those of Essequibo and Demerara. All the inhabitants were to retain possession of their properties and remain under their own laws, but, as in Essequibo, the colony plantations were to be confiscated to the King.

Berbice followed the fortunes of Demerara and Essequibo for the next three years, being under the same Governors, although nominally retaining her constitution, Council of Government, and laws. Things went on much as usual, and there does not appear to have been any particular difficulties with the planters. The French took over the

colony from the English on the same terms as those granted by Lord RODNEY, and after complaints had been made of the confiscation of the Society's plantations, the King ordered them to be considered as private estates, and to be restored, the Directors administering them during the French occupation as private planters. Governor KOPPIERS could not agree with the French authorities, as they took away even the semblance of power which he had formerly possessed, and setting himself against their commands, he was banished from the colony in June 1782.

Under both English and French, land concessions were made under favourable conditions, most of these being situated on the coast. As a rule they were of the area of five hundred acres, and the grantees were ordered to commence clearing the land in about three months, and to have a reasonable number of acres under cultivation within six months. Freedom from head-taxes was also given for five years, on the understanding that this should apply only to newly imported slaves, the taxes on the old ones being payable as usual. If the conditions were not complied with, the land would be confiscated, the grantee having the privilege of applying for a new concession, but losing his right to freedom from the head-tax.

The object of the French was to make Berbice something like Demerara, and probably they would have succeeded, had they retained possession of the colony. Even as it was, an impetus was given which was of great public benefit, and although the Association afterwards tried to undo the work, they did not entirely succeed. In 1783, two Demerara planters visited the colony to see what progress was being made, and the following extract from their "Journal"\* shews the then state of affairs :—

"On September 14th we travelled to the west point of the River Berbice in a yacht, and stepped ashore on Pln. *Cocoa Tree* belonging to Mr. BOTGER. Nothing had been finished, except part of the middle

\* Brieven, Aristodemus and Sincerus.

trench, by digging which a low dam had been made. We then went through a cocoterie or mangrove bush, to Pln. *Zeezigt*, belonging to Mr. BUSE, where a large piece of land had been empoldered. Through this, as well as the other plantation, a caddy reef stretched, which, we were told, extended to the Abary Creek. On the last plantation we saw, growing on the reef, plantains, corn, and cotton, all of which appear to thrive well, particularly the plantains. The ground appeared to us to be of the same nature and formation as that of the east and west sea coasts of Demerara, as far as could be judged from the portion already empoldered. It is covered with low bushes, without timber, and has the same long sedges that are seen in Demerara; it is therefore almost certain that all these grounds could be used for cotton as they are in our colony.

We sailed past a little post and battery on the west side, which had been built by the French, to Fort St. Andries. Through a cutting in the bush of Crab Island, these two fortifications can be seen from each other. It was told to us by a man who had crossed the island several times, that it possesses high ground, so that it is only overflowed at very high tides. It seemed to him that if it were empoldered, a fort or battery could be erected thereon, which would admirably defend both mouths of the river; this, with one battery and a heavy armament, could prevent the approach of any vessel.

We took our dinner with Mr. FAGAN, the Commander of Fort St. Andries, and from thence went on to the Canje. This is misnamed a river, being really only a creek, as it flows into the Berbice and not into the sea. Its mouth is too narrow to drain away the floods of a heavy rainy season, and, besides, the number of bends in the creek keep back the water so much, that the plantations high up cannot get rid of their water, and therefore become unworkable.

At a good distance up the creek, where the banks are higher, and the land rises, there are some old plantations, mostly of cacao, which, in former times, were of some importance, but now not of much account, either for cacao or cotton, which latter has been since planted. We did not go so far, as the distance was too great and the navigation too wearisome.

The lower Canje has good land on the right side going up, but the left bank appears to be poor savannah behind the thin bush, extending easterly a long distance to the sea coast. We came first to *Vryheid*, the plantation of Mr. KINGSBERGEN, on the right bank. This estate is that which was talked about so much in the newspapers and year-books, when the English privateers paid the river a visit in 1781; however, from what we were told, this estate was abandoned by all the whites on

the first report of the arrival of the English. The privateers finding nobody, burnt the buildings, which were then of very little value. This report appeared the more trustworthy as the plantation was quite unsuited to defend the colony.

Here we found some coffee, which looked well and promising. We then went on to Pln. *Anna Olementia*, nearly three quarters of an hour further up, which belongs to Mr. HOFHAM of Amsterdam. The land appeared to be of the best kind ; a rich, soft and at the same time heavy clay, covered with a little pegass. It has 500 roods façade, and, like most of the plantations here, not much depth. They believe the land to be worse further aback, but this is doubtful, as it has not had a good trial ; it appeared to us not to be so bad, although there was very little bush upon it. The estate appears to have been first planted in cacao, but now coffee and cotton are grown as well. The last product, in our opinion, can never be very successful. The ground is too rich, and the cotton tree goes too much into leaves and branches, bearing very few pods ; the north or north-east winds are also kept back by the bush on the left side, which breezes are necessary to the ripening of the produce. For these reasons it appears to us that they should rather confine themselves to the growing of cacao, as the trees enjoy shade and stillness. This is noticeable here, for we have never elsewhere seen the cacao trees looking so healthy. And further, although coffee grows beautifully, the preference should be given to cacao, as a locality so well suited for it is so seldom found, it having a rich sub-soil and being protected from the north and east winds.

Next to this plantation is that of Mr. SABLONIERE, named *Blyendaal* ; it is planted with coffee and cacao, which are both just beginning to bear fruit and look beautiful.

Beyond this comes the Society's Plantation *Sandvoort*, planted also with coffee and cacao, which were both commencing to bear fruit ; it is supplied with good buildings, and extends a great distance along the right bank of the river. They should not plant anything but cacao, more especially as this product can be worked at less expense than coffee.

After visiting these plantations we returned from the Canje, and as we came into the Berbice, we saw on our left hand the place to which, they say, the Society intends to remove the establishment at Fort Nassau, and to build a town. The situation appears to us as not badly chosen, being in everything more suitable than the present location, as with a town here the lower grounds could be opened out and planted. We then came to Fort St. Andries, to describe which is beyond our knowledge of fortifications. The barracks, hospital and houses of the com-

mander and other officers, appear very suitable, and it is astonishing to see what has been done here in four or five months. The fort lies in a large barren savannah ; whether this would be good for planting sugar, as some think, we have no means of judging until it is empoldered and trenches are dug.

On September 16th, about nine o'clock in the evening, we left St. Andries in the French king's ship *American*, and after getting far enough at sea we ran along the coast and arrived in the Demerara at the same time on the evening of the 17th.

*Remarks by the same writers.*—1. The prosperity of these colonies depends on their moving to the lower lands. Although the Colony of Berbice has been opened to all since 1730, it could not in 1780 load four vessels with produce. What would it have been if the inhabitants had not seen the fertility of the lower lands near the mouth of the Demerara, and transported their slaves from the upper part, as well as to the islands of Leguan and Wakenaam and the sea-coast ? Berbice expects that the same alterations in that colony will increase her good prospects.

2. That the taxes and impositions on an agricultural colony can be subjected to an indefinite increase is a mistake. It appears that planters only have been considered as interested in the cultivation of the land, while it is really the whole nation which benefits from it, although a planter when settling in a colony considers only his own interest. When he finds that heavy taxes are imposed, he also finds out that his profits will be small, and becomes discouraged, especially when, with only a few negroes, he has to put up with the loss of time in going to such a distance as Fort Nassau to enter his goods. Moreover, when he hears that in other colonies (*Demerara and Essequibo*) 'land is given for nothing, with ten years' freedom of taxes, the Berbice planter goes there and tries to induce others to follow him. This is the cause of the progress of Demerara, as compared with Berbice. Who enjoys the prosperity of the marshes and useless bush of Surinam, Berbice, Demerara and Essequibo when changed into plantations of sugar, coffee and cotton ? Certainly not the planters ! Very few of these have ever become wealthy ; on the contrary most of them only gain a mere subsistence, and may at any time sink into poverty, not always by their own fault, but from mistakes in taking up bad land. It is by the poverty of the land that the planter is impoverished, or the mortgagee loses his advances ; others then enjoy the trade and manufacture of the colony. And what but the land bears the expenses of the colony ? It is easy therefore to see the mistake of burdening the Berbice planter with such heavy taxes."

It will be seen from the above, that the French had taken

measures for the protection of the river, that the site of what is now New Amsterdam had been chosen, and that considerable progress was being made in laying out the coast plantations.

On the 20th of February 1784, KOPPIERS again took over the government, receiving it from the hands of the same French Commander who had banished him. On the 26th, he startled the whole colony by a Proclamation, that the Directors did not approve of the concessions made by the English and French, and therefore he had received orders to declare them illegal, all land, lots or grounds being thereby confiscated. Those who had already planted or built upon their concessions, might, if they wished to keep them, apply to the Governor and Council, who would refer their cases to the Directors. This made a great stir in the colony, all the grantees affected petitioning the Directors against it, or even going so far as to memorialise their High Mightinesses. Among others, HENDRIK JANSE BUSE, HENDRIK BOTJER, and ALBERT HEUER, made the following statement:—

“After the colony of Berbice had been taken from the English by His Christian Majesty, in 1782, they had asked for grants of 500 acres each on the West Sea Coast for cultivation. A favourable answer was received on the 3rd of July 1782, and the concessions granted, on condition that cultivation should be commenced before September 25th following, and other terms as stated above. They had received Pns. *Zeezyt, Caloen Boen, and Zeelust*, had them properly surveyed, planted cotton trees, and purchased a large number of slaves. Having complied with the conditions on their part, they considered that the Directors were equally bound to respect these engagements, as they were made in good faith. They therefore petitioned the States General to order the Directors to annul their Proclamation, or else give them compensation for the work done on the concessions.”

As a result of the petitions and protests the following notice was issued on the 15th of June 1785:—

“At the request of the planters, dated December 16th 1784, the lands granted by the English and French, are allowed to be retained on the following terms:—

“1. All lands given out by the English and French on the west bank of

the River Berbice, from Ithaca downward to the coast, are reclaimed by the Directors, as having been illegally granted; they are to be allowed to go back to bush, and everything on them is declared forfeited, without their occupiers having any right of claiming compensation, the Colony plantation *Rosignol* not even being excepted.

2. On the same footing are also placed, all plantations below Dankbarheid to the Makajeroere Creek, which lands have been reserved by the Directors since 1758, and were so marked on the chart; also the land called Feer in the Canje.

3. The other grounds granted by the English will be allowed to remain in the hands of the grantees, provided they submit to conduct themselves according to the regulations and pay the acre-money.

4. It is ordered that the above be exactly and promptly carried out, and as the Directors would not like to hear of any objections, the Governor is authorised to enforce these orders against all opposition."

This was a great blow to Berbice, from which it did not recover for several years. The example of the rise in Demerara was before the Directors, but they could not see anything beyond present profit and loss. To restore the colony to its old position, and put it in proper order for defence, application was again made to the States General for a subsidy, which was granted to the amount of £200,000, on condition that the trade be quite free. By this means soldiers were again sent out, and Mr. HEBLIN, who had remained in the colony, was directed to alter Fort St. Andries, so as to make it a substantial fortification. At the same time, it was finally resolved to abandon Fort Nassau, and remove the seat of government to the neighbourhood of Fort St. Andries, the site of what is now New Amsterdam. Although this resolution was made in 1785, it was not until about five years afterwards that the town was first commenced, the engineer being meanwhile engaged on the improvement of Fort St. Andries.

The most striking point about all improvements in these colonies is that they took such very long periods to accomplish, and it is only by considering the circumstances that the reason can be discovered. In Berbice, as in Essequibo, there was a number of slaves who had been specially trained

as carpenters, bricklayers, brickmakers, coopers &c., who collectively went under the name of *winkels*. These were under superintendence and formed what would now be called the Public Works Department. They were not only employed for the benefit of the colony, but also hired out to the inhabitants generally, there being no free workmen to be had, even if the authorities would have allowed them to set up in opposition. Such being the state of affairs, it may easily be seen that the number of skilled tradesmen were too few to complete even an ordinary building within a reasonable time.

KOPPIERS did not altogether please the Directors, and in carrying out their orders he managed to get into difficulties with the inhabitants. In April 1789 he was dismissed from office on account of his arbitrary and assuming behaviour, after which he went to Demerara and became leader of the Orange party in the little revolution of 1795.

The new Governor was Major ABRAHAM JACOB VAN IMBYSE VAN BATENBURG, who had been Commander of the Troops since 1784, and, in virtue of his office, had sat in the Council. He was provisionally appointed by a resolution of the 23rd of September 1789, but did not get his Commission until February 28th 1794. Being a gentleman of considerable ability, he set to work to improve the colony as much as possible. Soon after his assumption of the government, the new Colony House was finished, and Fort Nassau was finally abandoned. In 1791 the Directors at last gave concessions for cotton estates of five hundred acres each on the coast, forty-six being granted on the 12th of January. Each plantation was to pay a tax of one stiver per acre, and make up a road, this being the first time that the latter condition is found attached to Berbice land grants.

VAN BATENBURG was a gentleman of the old school, well educated, liberal after a fashion, more French than Dutch, and altogether well suited for his post. His principles



were not pronounced, nor could it be said that he had any leaning towards either the Orange or Tricolor party. Whichever was at the top did not matter to him so long as he was Governor of Berbice. During his administration Government House was the centre of a brilliant and fashionable society, which, permeated by French ideas, made Berbice very lively. Intrigues were common, the Governor himself being compelled to divorce his first wife and the mother of his large family. As in Europe, drinking and gambling were common at all assemblies, often resulting in quarrels and hostile meetings. In the presence of ladies politeness was assumed to a most absurd extent, but where men alone met together hardly anything but the vilest intrigues were discussed, and these in language that now-a-days would shock all but the most depraved. The Governor seems to have made himself very popular, everyone speaking well of him, but, as will be seen later, he afterwards became most obnoxious to all but a very few sycophants and lick-spittles.

Before concluding the story of Berbice while under the control of the trading Association, we can hardly fail to observe that every concession that showed the least sign of liberality was either tabooed, or granted in a particularly ungracious manner. As a natural consequence, this colony was far behind its neighbour, Demerara, even before the latter was freed from the incubus of the West India Company. Here we have the Dutch element only, leavened a little by the French, while the neighbouring colony was permeated with English ideas, and to a great extent dominated by them. It seems to be generally conceded that the Dutch people have not the genius for colonisation, and such an opinion is apparently justified by the results of their occupation of the three rivers and Surinam. That the English settler made his mark in Demerara, is shown by the fact that by his influence Essequibo was left in the

background, while the former river was admitted by both English and French during their occupation as the most important of the three. The example of the neighbouring river was before the Directors of Berbice, but unfortunately the main question with them was present profit and not progress; in this respect the West India Company and the Berbice Association were equally blind.

In 1795 the Berbice Association abrogated its supreme power so far as the government and defence of the colony was concerned, this being assumed by the Council of the West Indian Colonies, but no change was made in its proprietary rights. The colony being under the Charter of 1732, no alteration in the government was necessary, so that this slight reform was hardly noticed.

Very little progress had been made since the insurrection, the returns of slaves for 1790 showing that the number was only 5,862, this being little more than before 1763. With the remove to the lower district, however, an impetus was at once given to the colony, the slaves increasing from 6,709 in 1792 to 8,122 in 1795. Up to 1796 the new town was little better than an ugly clearing, with here and there a house, without drains or roads. Government House was finished first, and is said to have been a finer building than any other in Berbice or even Demerara. Half a mile of swamp, covered with tree stumps was the site of what is now New Amsterdam. The old town was now abandoned, but with the exception of a large warehouse there does not appear to have been any building of importance, the plantation system of the Dutch offering no inducements for merchants or shopkeepers to settle in a capital, as every plantation shipped its produce and received supplies direct from the mother country.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### *THE THREE RIVERS IN 1796.*

The plantations—The Dutch proprietor—His manner of living—His housekeeper—His slaves—Stabroek—The market—The Militia—The Fiscal and Secretary—Mynheer Bercheyck, a gentleman of the old school—Mynheer Vos, a rough planter—Old Glen, the Swedenborgian—Story of Kate Delaney—Boode, the richest planter in the three rivers—Prices of food and clothing—Berbice contrasted with Demerara and Essequibo.

**T**HE colony of Demerara and Essequibo was in a fairly prosperous condition in the year 1796, notwithstanding the great drawback of being almost shut out from the markets of Europe by British cruisers. Being no longer hampered by the struggle with the West India Company, there were signs of progress visible on every hand. From the Abary to the Pomeroun the coast lands were more or less under cultivation, but hardly any of the estates were empoldered to anything like the extent of their acreage. The sugar plantations were very few, and mostly situated up the river Demerara, the staple produce of the two rivers being coffee and cotton. Almost without exception, the estates now in sugar cultivation on both banks of the Demerara, including those covered by the city of Georgetown, the banks of the canals, and the West Coast of Demerara, were planted with coffee. In the other direction, the East Coast was entirely devoted to the cultivation of cotton, it being considered that land lately reclaimed from the sea and impregnated with salt, was entirely unsuitable for the sugar cane, while extremely well fitted for cotton. Owing to the free trade in slaves since the fall of the

Company there had been a great increase in the negro population, amounting now to about to 55,000.

Unlike the uniform monotony of an estate of the present day, the coffee or cotton plantation was very beautiful, the fields of coffee being shaded by tall trees, under which a delightful walk could be taken in dry weather. Besides these, fruit trees were common everywhere, giving a character to the plantation quite different to the present dull uniform level of cane fields and bare dams.

The planters' houses were generally large and well built, but without anything like ornament, unless gaudy yellow and red paint could be called so. As at the present day they were raised from the ground on pillars or brick walls, and always surrounded by galleries or piazzas. The most noticeable difference as compared with existing residences, was the absence of glass windows, wooden shutters being invariably used, which made the rooms very dull in wet weather. Troolie thatch was commonly used for the roof, so that altogether the houses would have been very ugly if they had not been hidden in foliage and relieved by climbing plants which festooned the galleries. The interior was kept scrupulously clean, the Dutch vrows or the manager's housekeepers, being very particular in that respect.

Most of the proprietors lived on their estates, only a few of those belonging to Amsterdam merchants being left in the hands of competent managers. The "Massa" was a very great personage, every one in his little kingdom treating him with the most servile respect. He rose with the sun and came down to the gallery in dressing-gown and slippers, then taking a little silver whistle from his pocket, blew it as a signal to the house-boy, who brought coffee, pipes, tobacco, and the indispensable gin flask. With these the planter made himself comfortable until about nine o'clock, the boy being in attendance to provide a fire-stick whenever a fresh pipe was filled. By this time the overseer

arrived to give his report of what was being done, and to receive his further orders. Then came the morning wash, which was by no means a formidable operation, being nothing more than pouring a tumbler of water on the hands and rubbing them over the face, after which the boy gave him a napkin to wipe himself. This was done in the gallery or in front of a window, the gentleman hanging his head over to let the water fall outwards. Having had his *bath* then came the dressing, which was a far more elaborate operation, the planter being very particular in regard to this, especially if going to town or to visit a neighbour. At eleven o'clock came a heavy breakfast of pepper-pot, salt fish, and beef steaks, with plenty of roast plantains and other vegetables, being preluded by an appetiser and closed by a digester from the inevitable flask, while in the course of the meal a few glasses of claret, beer, or "London Particular Madeira" were taken. Having got so far he went for a ride, either round the estate, to a neighbour's, or to a vendue in town if not too far away. In all his rides he jogged along easily, smoking his pipe or cigar, being accompanied by the boy, whose special business was to keep the fire-stick in readiness. If he lived far from town the tent-boat was ordered out and he luxuriated on the cushions, while the stalwart negroes rowed him swiftly along. Some of these boats were almost like Royal barges, being decorated in the gaudy style of the time with gold and the most brilliant colours, the Dutchman taking a very great interest in his vehicle, and emulating his neighbours. If there was a vendue going on, he was bound to attend it, to have a chat with his neighbours, and, as plenty of drinks were provided, a very jolly time was spent on these occasions. If married, he sometimes took his wife to a slave vendue, where she would often show great shrewdness in the selection of a house wench. At three or four o'clock, if not detained, the planter came home, and, after a schnap,

sat down to dinner, with plenty of Madeira, which being done and another glass of Holland's and a pipe taken, he lay in his hammock for a short nap. If not too late when he awoke MYNHERR took a quiet stroll round the buildings, where every one treated him with the greatest respect. The overseer took off his hat and addressed him as *Edele Achtbaar Heer*, (Great and Honoured Sir) while the negroes were cringingly polite with their genuflexions and curtsies. It being now evening, a neighbour would perhaps arrive, but, in the absence of a visitor, the overseer would be invited to come and play a game of cards or draughts, which that gentleman considered a great honour. If "Massa" was in a benevolent mood he would order the slaves to be supplied with schnaps of rum in the yard, while he sat in the gallery, receiving their homage and thanks. About eight or nine o'clock he went to bed, very rarely incapacitated by his numerous drinks, but what may be called well-soaked.

The Dutchmen were very proud of their houses and the number of their female servants, these latter in many cases forming little private seraglios. They also took a very great interest in their slaves, horses and cattle, liking to see them in good condition and to show them off to their neighbours. As there were very few white women, and those only wives who had been brought from the Netherlands, most of the young men bought coloured girls, who performed all the duties of the mistress of a house, except presiding at table. Their value was generally about £100 to £150 and they were mostly bought by private arrangement rather than open sale. When a man married he sold his late mistress, if he could find a buyer; some of these passing from hand to hand until they got old and ugly. The male children of these connections were generally manumitted and sent to Europe for their education, it sometimes happening that a son owned his own mother as a

slave, while his sister might be the mistress of a neighbouring planter. Custom and fashion recognised these connections to a certain extent, and it often happened that a wife would be kind and friendly to her husband's former mistress. Being kept in the background, these ladies saw little of society and were therefore thrown a great deal on their own resources. Uneducated and without accomplishments, they spent most of their time in looking after household duties, very often ruling the negro wenches with a very strong hand. Like all ignorant women they were fond of jewellery and fine clothes, which they managed to buy from the huxters who travelled about the country. These were mostly coloured people, owning a few porters, who carried on all the retail trade in fancy goods and wares.

Slaves were looked upon in the light of children. As bad boys and girls they were to be corrected if necessary, but being valuable property great care was taken that they should not be injured. If a negro chopped an overseer with a cutlass, the white man hardly dared to go beyond a light flogging as a punishment, for fear that the proprietor might charge him with injuring his property. The best planters considered that the negro was possessed of the feelings and affections of the human race to a slight extent, but some thought him so utterly inferior as to be merely an animal, and to be treated as such. The benevolent looked upon slavery as a necessary evil, without which none of the sugar colonies could exist. The negro was studied carefully with a view to his master's interest, and as that was not consistent with cruelty, it may be confidently stated that as a rule the slave was not ill-treated. Compared with the sailor on board a man-of-war the slave was in a far better position. Both were kept under strict discipline, but whereas the loss of a sailor was of little pecuniary consequence, that of a seasoned negro meant at least a hundred pounds.

From a book written by a West Indian of this period for the use of planters\*, we can see how careful they were of lives and health of their slaves. The greatest difficulty was the seasoning or acclimatization, in the course of which nearly a quarter of the negroes died. There were great differences between them, the majority forgetting their miseries long before the end of the voyage, being solely governed by present feelings and impressions. Others however meditated on their troubles with the anguish and poignancy of civilized man. In such cases there was reason to fear that they would commit suicide, and therefore it was necessary to use every means possible to prevent them brooding over their wrongs, by kind, soothing and gentle treatment. The causes of their grief were generally expatriation, or separation from some friend or relation, either in the Guinea slave yard or since their arrival. If it should be possible, the planter was advised to try and bring relations together, so that they might divert each other by talking in their own language. Then the master himself should learn a few words so as to be able to condole with them. "You should smile upon them, shake them by the hand, give them snuff, and gratify their little wants, for they are particularly attentive to the looks and behaviour of the person into whose hands they fall." They should never be left alone, but be put in the hands of a guardian, a negro of their own country, who must attend them night and day, sleep with them, talk to them, explain things, and amuse them by an encouraging prospect of their future treatment. He should also look after their meals, see what they could eat, and acquaint the master of any causes of dissatisfaction, or find out if they had any ailments, to which all negroes were liable. The food should be as nearly as possible that to which they had been accustomed, while they should be indulged with tobacco and snuff as well as

\* *Rules or the Management of Negro Slaves, by a Professional Planter, 1803.*



an allowance of spirits now and then. It was thought better to give them light employment at first, rather than allow them to remain idle, as it kept them from brooding over their troubles. As soon as they had recovered from the effects of the voyage, a house and lot of land were to be given, the guardian being directed to superintend the planting of provisions, while the overseer was to look over the negro grounds occasionally to see that they were kept in order. They were now to be put in the weak gang, and if inclined to idle, the other negroes might laugh at them, and if that had no effect, they might be scolded or a few of their indulgences withheld, but not beaten on any account. Stripes should never be employed at the beginning, and only afterwards on very pressing occasions. By these means they were to be gradually trained to obedience and habitual labour. Some would feign illness at first, and great care was to be taken that no mistake was made, as it would be better to let them rest a day or two, than to force them to work when really sick. In general they followed the rest of the gang, and soon became good labourers. Severity was sometimes necessary, but the planter must be always governed by policy rather than passion. If they should run away, which they commonly did, they were not to be terrified by threats or punished, but put under the care of a faithful negro and locked up at night. The time of seasoning was generally about a year, but it varied very much according to the tribe of negroes and many other circumstances. The planters would not buy the sick and unsound, so these were generally sold cheap to coloured persons or even slaves.

On account of the disparity of the sexes, some difficulty was experienced in providing wives for the slaves; this led to promiscuous intercourse, which naturally tended to prevent increase otherwise than by fresh importations. The experienced planter took pains to provide a sufficient

number of women, often going so far as to take a single man to a slave auction and buying the woman of his choice. With a suitable cabin, a wife, a piece of ground which could be cultivated on Saturdays and Sundays, allowances of salt meat, and all the clothes that were really necessary, the plantation slave was very comfortable. He had absolutely no cares. If a woman was in the latter stage of child-bearing, she did very little work, and when "Massa's little nigger" was born, every effort was made to help her to rear it. When old, they still received their allowances, and many of them saved quite a nice little sum from the sale of fowls, pigs, and the produce of their grounds. One old negro woman is reported to have died with fifteen hundred dollars, which was distributed among her children, thus proving that the property of slaves was respected. Notwithstanding that the slave had few legal rights, custom and usage gave him as much liberty as was really necessary for his comfort. Indulgences were granted to deserving negroes according to circumstances, the manager who understood his business taking care that they should have no real ground of complaint. Public opinion was strongly against anything like cruelty; to be stigmatised in that way lost a manager his situation, and caused the proprietor to be shunned by his neighbours. To tell a planter that he had ill-used one of his negroes was an insult of the gravest kind, only to be wiped out by a meeting in the early morning with swords or pistols. That the slaves were not overworked is proved by the fact that hundreds of them were able to save money, gained by labour in their own time, which if they had been worked to the extreme point, would have been impossible. The market of Stabroek was entirely supplied with ground provisions and feathered stock from the private allotments of the slaves.

One of the arguments which might be used in favour of

the opinion that the slaves were ill-treated was the fact that they ran away so often. Considering them in the light of children however, who we know are inclined to do the same thing on very slight pretexts, no deduction can be drawn from this alone. On the contrary, there is evidence that very few runaways excused themselves by imputing cruelty to their masters, their reasons being generally of such a frivolous nature as to be worthless. When a negro was captured he was examined by the Fiscal or his deputy, and as that official was always on the lookout for offenders against the slave regulations,—mainly on account of his third share in the fines—any charge of cruelty would naturally be carefully investigated. Although their evidence was not received in the Court of Justice, this was no bar to a strict private examination of the runaways, on the result of which depended their punishment or a fine on the master. There were plenty of unruly and obstinate negroes, who naturally got a whipping occasionally, but taken altogether there was less punishment than has been generally supposed, while the whip in the field was used more of an emblem of authority than otherwise.

The negroes owned by middle-men and hired out as Task Gangs, at about two guilders a day per head, were much worse off than those belonging to the plantations. Their proprietors always stipulated that they should be well-fed by the hirers, but it may naturally be supposed that, between the two parties, their best interests were more or less neglected. But the worst position of all was that of the poor man's nigger—he who belonged to a coloured person or even a plantation slave. Being the refuse of the slave ship—weak, sickly and perhaps suffering from yaws—bought at auction for a few guilders—these poor wretches were cured after a fashion and employed to carry the heavy loads of the huxters, or to work in the slave's

provision ground. An English planter, when his slave was unruly, threatened to sell him to a Dutchman, while a Dutchman in a similar case, threatened him with a free negro or mulatto.

The town of Stabroek consisted then of two long rows of houses with a grassy street between them, down the middle of which ran a brick pavement for foot passengers, known at present from this circumstance as the Brick Dam. PINCKARD states that the houses were "bedaubed with tawdry colours like Dutch toys." Parallel with the Brick Dam, but at the backs of both rows of houses were two draining and navigation trenches known as the North and South Canals, the former now existing with some alteration in Croal Street, and the latter, partly filled up, in Hadfield Street. The public road nearly corresponded to what is now Main Street, and was nothing but a turf dam, almost impassable in wet weather, being then ankle-deep in mud. Carriages were hardly known, visits from town to the fort being paid in the tent-boat, but one or two sedan chairs were in use in Stabroek, probably more for the sake of appearance and fashion than anything else. Under the regulations no shops could be opened outside of Stabroek, but it appears that a few merchants had already established themselves near what was called the American wharf or stelling, while one or two stores had been opened in front of Plantation *Werk-en-Rust*.

Government House was the building now well-known as the Saffon Institution, while the Town Guard House stood near the site of the present Magistrate's Office, in the vicinity of which were other public buildings, the principal being the Secretary's Office, which included the Chambers of the Council of Policy and Justice and the place of worship. A market was held on Sundays, when the slaves—who easily got passes if they had not misbehaved—came to town in great numbers, bringing the produce of their

allotments, together with fowls, ducks, eggs, and sometimes pigs. Here also congregated the huxters, ready to sell gaudy handkerchiefs and jewellery to the negro when he had disposed of his stock. Besides these were stalls which corresponded to the corner shop of to-day—but which was unknown at that time—where salt meat and fish, bread, cheese, tobacco, &c., could be bought in small quantities. The market of that time was much the same as at present, filled with a noisy crowd of negroes, who were virtually free for the day, and indulged their propensity for bawling, quarrelling and fighting to their hearts' content. As long as they only quarrelled among themselves, no one interfered with them—in fact to strike another man's negro was actionable. There were a few free negroes about the market, but most of these were ragged and disreputable, comparing very unfavourably with the slaves from the plantations.

Every white man in the colony between the ages of sixteen and fifty, necessarily belonged to the Militia, this force always claiming that they were only bound to serve against internal tumult, revolts of slaves, and to hunt run-aways. It does not appear that they were ever called together to repel an invader, and when it was suggested by the British Commander that they should be prepared to defend the colony against the French they absolutely refused. The Officers were appointed by the Council of Policy, a Burgher-Captain being a rather important personage, combining with his Militia duties, those of a justice of the peace, and commissary. Besides performing these duties, he had to act as the medium between the government and the people, circulating the various Proclamations, collecting the returns of the assessment of taxes, and generally seeing that the laws were enforced, and reporting the offenders to the Fiscal.

The Fiscal was the principal Government Officer, next to the Governor, being Attorney General, chief magistrate,

Chief Commissary, and legal adviser to the Government. Several of these officers were at various times charged with conniving at breaches of the law, provided the delinquent "tipped" them to the extent of their share of the fines incurred. As the expenses of the Court of Justice were considerable, it often happened that something more than the Fiscal's third found its way into his pocket. Having such a small salary, he, like several other Officials, had to depend to a very great extent on the emoluments of his office, which made him very sharp in pouncing on breaches of the regulations as to roads, slaves, &c. The Secretary was also very particular in looking after his fees, which amounted to £110 for a marriage licence and about the same for a manumission, transport, mortgage or other deed which had to be registered. Later, the Fiscal and Secretary held the most lucrative offices in the colony, the former being reported as receiving from £6,000 to £8,000, which put him in a better position than the Governor. This however was only a guess, as no one but himself could discover the amount of his fees, many of them not appearing in any official document.

Among so many different nationalities it would be natural to suppose that there were a number of curious and eccentric characters. One planter would live in the greatest luxury possible, dressing in the extreme of French fashion, while his neighbour might be a rough seaman who had ran away from his ship, and wanted nothing more than a hut, a hammock, and an Indian woman. Whoever they were and whatever they had been, however, they agreed almost universally in being very hospitable. A stranger might stop at the planter's house for weeks without any special invitation, where he would be treated to the best of everything, including the hospitality of the bedchamber. The only churl discovered by Dr. PINCKARD was the proprietor of the Sand Hills, who seems to have been poor and unsuccessful.

Among the gentlemen of the old school was MYNHEER BEROHEYCK, owner at this time of the last estate up the Mahaica Creek, who was visited by Dr. PINCKARD\*, and described by him as "one of the most eccentric and remarkable characters upon this coast."

Proceeding up the Mahaica in a handsome canoe which had been sent by BEROHEYCK, PINCKARD and his friends were towed through a canal by slaves almost up to the house, where on landing they were met by the gentleman, who saluted them in a most reverential manner. BEROHEYCK was "a remarkably fine old man, robust and square-built, of hale countenance and sturdy form, very erect in his carriage, and possessing uncommon activity, together with great bodily strength and vast energy of mind. His person and address were strongly impressive, being at once graceful and dignified, although such as to convey an idea of the rigid precision of a formal old square-toes." At first sight he appeared to be stern and unbending, but after further acquaintance PINCKARD found him affable, jocular, and communicative. He was dressed in a nankeen coat, waistcoat, and breeches, all cut in the true antique fashion, a white beaver hat, and square-toed shoes with buckles. In his right hand he carried a stick, and as he walked, his ruffled hand gave it a circular sweep, while "the tail of his coat moved with an important swing from side to side in unison with the majestic sway of his body." He gave the party a separate welcome, taking each by the hand and bowing to him with the profoundest politeness and urbanity.

BEROHEYCK's house was quite a pretty rustic place, the walls and partitions being formed of the leaf-stalks of the Eta, placed upright, with bamboos at intervals, neither disfigured by paint or concealed in any way. The floor was of brick, the windows mere openings in the walls, and

\* Notes on the West Indies.

the furniture of plain wood, unadorned. Embowered in cotton bushes and bananas, and on the edge of the savannah, this habitation was occupied by a man of refined manners, who had been well educated, and had visited Holland, where he had moved in some of the best society. As may be supposed, such a man can hardly have succeeded well in business. Being formerly possessed of *Pln. Gorcum*, he had occupied himself in training birds and fishes, instead of attending to his plantation, with the result that he was compelled to dispose of it and remove to this secluded spot. Here his garden and plantation supplied almost everything that he absolutely required, while the cotton crop gave him his luxuries. His flocks and herds were numerous, consisting of cows, sheep and poultry, so that there was no scarcity of meat, milk or eggs. His only drinks were Madeira wine and water, he did not use sugar, and what was most wonderful in a Dutchman, he did not smoke.

The visitors were served only by females, of whom PINCKAED says, BERCHEYOK had the finest assemblage he had yet seen among the people of colour.

“ His cottage is a rich seraglio—himself the Sultan. A finer collection of half-naked belles it were difficult to meet with. They consist of Indians, negroes, mulattoes, and a finely formed race between the inhabitants of the woods and the blacks. One of the mulattoes, from her dress and ornaments, appeared to be the reigning sultana of the day. The number of females about the cottage was sixteen or seventeen, all well selected, and the most beautiful of their race. Six or seven of them are of an age to acknowledge the kind smiles of their lord; the others are growing up, one above another, in succession, so that each in her turn, will probably become the favourite slave of their majestic seignor. A Turkish Sultan, selecting from his best dominions, might not boast of finer forms, nor of more obedient and devoted slaves than these of the stately BERCHEYOK;



who has all the advantage of seeing the virgins of his harem grow up under his own eye, knowing them to be his sole and absolute property—not merely the slaves of his passions, but also of his caprice and his fortune.”

The old gentleman was very strict towards his slaves, but his arbitrary government was so tempered with kindness and humanity, that he was willingly obeyed from respect rather than fear. If a slave bowed to him he always took off his own hat in return, because (he said) he would not suffer a negro to shew more politeness and good manners than himself, but if he attempted to pass without doing this the old gentleman gave the delinquent a cut with his cane to teach him that respect was due to the whites. Altogether, BERCHEYCK seemed to have been a great stickler for form and ceremony, but by no means a bad fellow, notwithstanding his well-filled seraglio.

As a contrast to BERCHEYCK, MYNHEER VOS may be mentioned, whose character is well described by BOLINGBROKE\*. He came to the colony about 1770 as a common soldier, and contrived, by buying and selling while in that capacity, to purchase his discharge and retain a few hundred guilders to commence the trade of a peddler. Being very energetic he was able, notwithstanding some heavy losses from the vessels in which his goods had been shipped, running ashore, to amass sufficient capital to build a hut on the West Coast of Demerara to use as a repository for his goods. In 1785, he purchased an estate in Essequibo which he commenced to clear and plant with the aid of only three negroes. Here he was visited by BOLINGBROKE, who found him living in what he called a negro hut, to which there was no proper pathway, or even bridge over the trench which lay in front of it. An old Indian woman came to the door and informed him in answer to his enquiry for the house of the proprietor, that MYNHEER lived there, and that he

\* Voyage to the Demerary.

was then in the field with the negroes. The Indian woman, who was the mistress of the house, sent her daughter, Miss QUASHEBA Vos, a yellow buckeen girl of the age of twelve or thirteen, without shoes, to call her father, and then introduced the visitor into the sitting room. Here he was left to look around him and admire the furniture, which consisted of a large carpenter's chest, an old deal table, two stools, a bench, two or three empty gin cases, a hammock, a mattress stuffed with plantain leaves, a hogshead of salt fish, and barrels of salt beef, tobacco and salt. The roof was covered with plantain leaves, which afforded a good hiding place for centipedes, scorpions and cockroaches, while the clay floor was covered with ants, these appearing to be the only scavengers. Plenty of live stock were feeding about the house, including even pigs, while some chickens were roosting on the rafters above the visitor's head.

MYNHEER Vos' arrival was heralded by his blowing a shell to call his negroes to dinner, after which he appeared and shook hands with his visitor. He was nearly six feet high, very thin and emaciated, his face, hands and bare feet wrinkled, and the colour of tanned leather, while his chin was disfigured by a month's growth of bristles. "His hat, made of plantain leaves, was very broad in the brim, he had a pipe in his mouth, about two inches long in the tube," and a brown umbrella in his hand. His jacket and trousers were of Russia duck, which with a checked shirt, comprised the whole of his dress. Having offered the visitor a schnap of gin, which he declined in favour of a glass of lemonade made with molasses and lime juice, they proceeded to business. His note of hand for a thousand pounds being presented to this scarecrow, the visitor probably feeling a little anxious as to the result, Vos, taking an old writing desk from under the table, counted out a set of drafts on a good London house for the full amount, with

an apology for giving him the trouble of collecting it. Such was the owner of an estate worth twenty thousand pounds, with only the buckeen girl QUASHEBA to inherit it.

BERCHEYOK and Vos may be considered in some respects rather as types of two classes, than as eccentrics, but this cannot be said of JAMES GLEN, who certainly was peculiar in many respects. He was a Scotchman, and one of the little band of Swedenborgians who formed the Theosophical Society in London in 1784. Coming to Demerara as the mate of a merchant vessel, he received a grant of land, bought a few negroes and settled down as a planter. In about seven years he had attained an assured position, but going on board a vessel one day he found that the Captain, a Swedenborgian, was in possession of some of the books of the mystic writer. This revived GLEN's old enthusiasm, which now possessed him to his own ruin. Obtaining the works of his beloved author he studied them until he became imbued with carelessness as to his temporal concerns. He also studied the Greek and Hebrew languages so as to be able to understand the Bible. His estate was neglected, everything went wrong, the negroes ran away or became careless and lazy, and every day GLEN became poorer and poorer. Not having money to pay for a large shipment of his favourite books, his estate was levied upon and sold. Being now destitute, he set up as a preacher, but without much success either among the whites or negroes. We next find him in Berbice as a private soldier, where he fell into disgrace for sleeping when on duty, and was sentenced to "run the gauntlet." In pity the Commanding Officer would have remitted the punishment, but this GLEN refused to allow, being so determined to suffer for his offence that he chided his comrades if they did not strike hard enough. Returning to Demerara he was offered a home at Warrow's Place, the wood-cutting establishment of CHARLES EDMONSTONE on the Mibiri Creek.

Here he built himself a benab and wandered about with no covering but a long shirt, trying to teach the Indians something of his mystical religion, with what success may be seen from the following extracts from his letters :—

“ Few men have ever inquired by questions into the thoughts, ideas, and affections of negroes and Indians as I have ; and though they have seen me most desirous to pump all the knowledge I could out of them, yet I never yet found one who had the least desire to inquire after any knowledge of any kind by a single question put to me. Yea, I am certain, there is no Negro or Indian here, man or woman, who would not ten times rather choose a hand of tobacco, or a bottle of new rum, or five or six bitts in dry money, than any kind of knowledge I could communicate ; and as to spiritual knowledges of any kind, they are totally averse to them ; money and sensual pleasures and fine clothes are seated in the inmost chamber of their affections.”

“ It may be urged, instruct the negroes when young, and you will make them real Christians. I answer from the bottom of my heart, I believe a Negro or any kind of Indian child at six or seven years to be so full of hereditary evil, of pride and greed, of self and the world, of sensual and corporeal affections, that it would be as easy to turn a young dog into a young sheep, or a lime into a mango tree, as to make them real internal Christians.”\*

Before his death “ Old GLEN” managed to secure a few followers, who established a little branch of the New Jerusalem Church in Demerara, which lasted thirty or forty years, but is now quite extinct.

As illustrating the social customs of the times and the immoral side of slavery, the case of *KATE DELANEY* will be interesting. Her father was a French Colonel, who lived in one of the best houses on Broadway, New York, where *KATE* was born about the year 1765, her mother being a free black woman named *HESTER*, then living with the Colonel as his housekeeper. Like many French mulattoes she was a handsome child, and as she grew up was allowed to become the playfellow of a *Miss DANIEL*, the daughter of one of her father’s friends. There does not appear to have been any prejudice against her, either on account of

\* *White’s Life of Swedenburg.*

her birth or colour, nor did her father ignore her in any way, but on the contrary treated her with the kindness of a parent. KATE and Miss DANIELS became such fast friends that when the latter was sent to England in 1778 to finish her education KATE went with her as a companion. The two girls passed through the same course of studies at Bristol, and when the holidays came round, were invited to visit Miss DANIELS' uncle, the great merchant.

At last the time came when, their education being finished, the girls were ready to go home, but meanwhile the colonies had revolted, and it was rather difficult for an English vessel to get to New York. After some delay however Mr. DANIELS obtained a passage for them in Admiral Sir RICHARD HUGHES' flag-ship, which was about to sail for Barbados, and from thence was expected to proceed to New York and assist in its evacuation by the British. They arrived in Barbados on the 8th of December 1783, where Miss DANIELS was suddenly taken ill with a putrid fever, and being put ashore, died three days afterwards. Admiral HUGHES having left the island, KATE was now friendless in a strange place, but a Mr. REDWOOD soon came forward, and, stating that he knew Mr. DANIELS, took over the effects of her friend, invited KATE to his house and treated her very kindly for a few days while she was overcome by her loss. His kindness however did not last long, for, having made certain shameful proposals to her, which she rejected with scorn, he studied how to be revenged for her contemptuous treatment. Not daring to carry out his malicious views in Barbados, where several persons knew how the girls had arrived, he dissembled so far as to tell KATE that he would put her on board a vessel bound for New York, to which she quite willingly agreed. Accordingly she went on board, in eager expectation of soon meeting her father.

What must have been her alarm and distress, when a

few days afterwards the vessel anchored in the Demerara river, and the rascally Captain, who was in the plot, brought off a lot of planters to see the handsome mulatto girl he had for sale. Of course she protested that she was not a slave, but the visitors had heard such stories before, and took very little account of her statement against that of the Captain. Her tears and protestations had no effect on the Captain or his visitors. It was not the first time that a coloured girl had asserted that she was free, when there was no evidence beyond her own word, against which was that of a white man. It naturally followed therefore that she was sold at a good price, her owner being Mr. E. BUTTÉ, with whom she lived as housekeeper until his marriage, having become apparently reconciled to her condition. Before bringing home his wife Mr. BUTTÉ disposed of his housekeeper to Mr. JOHN RYAN of Pln. *Maria Elizabeth*, Leguan, to whom she bore two children, remaining with him until he also got married, when she was again sold. Her new master was a boat-builder of Leguan, with whom she lived for fifteen years in "perfect concord," bearing two children, one of whom died young while the other was sent to England to be educated. Although the different masters must have known her story, none of them seems to have thought of giving her a legal manumission, so that when the boat-builder died she was still a slave, the executors telling her she must buy her freedom if she wanted it, as they had to pay the expenses of her son's education. However, they were not hard upon her, but giving her a free pass so that she could work for a living as well as her freedom, she was virtually her own mistress. By the kindness of Mrs. RYAN, widow of her second master, who lent her a thousand guilders, she bought her freedom, and by dint of industry and frugality saved enough to pay the debt.

She was now owner of herself—nominally free but not

legally so, as the expense of a proper manumission was beyond her means. In the year 1815, when she told her story in a petition to the Court of Policy, she was in possession of a half-lot of land and cottage in Cumingsburg, as well as a slave woman with two children. By means of the negress she carried on the trade of a huxter, but she had never been able to save the legal manumission fees, and therefore asked for the necessary documents free of expense on the ground of the "peculiarly unfortunate vicissitudes of her life."

"Your petitioner's entire life has been faithfully and invariably devoted to the domestic duties, and the perils, anxieties and toils of bearing a numerous progeny to gentlemen of respectability and rank in this colony. She was born free, a native of a winter country, and the daughter of a man of rank and distinction; she was introduced into life by a most respectable lady, among some of the first families in England; especially has she been inhumanly and illegally deprived of her liberty, but nevertheless submitted to her degraded condition with resignation, in humble obedience to the will of God; lastly, she is advanced in age, unable to work as heretofore, and can barely maintain herself."

Her petition was granted, a certificate of conditional freedom being given free of expense.

The wealthiest estates proprietor in the colony appears to have been Mr. J. F. BOODE, who was owner of Plns. *La Grange, Cornelia Ida, Uitvlugt, De Kinderen* and *Boode's Lust*, with two thousand slaves. He was said to have been originally a drummer boy, coming to Demerara from Surinam, where he had served his term with the troops. By steady perseverance he had acquired a princely estate which was reported to give him an income of £50,000 per annum, and to be worth considerably over a million dollars, as the slaves alone would be valued at nearly that sum.

The common food products of the colony were moderate in price at this time, but anything beyond absolute necessities was very expensive. Plantains were sold at a bit to a bit and a half a bunch, sweet potatoes and yams at a bit a gallon, while bread was a bit a pound. Meat was high and rarely to be procured, beef and mutton being three or four bits a pound and pork two bits and a half. Loaf sugar sold for six bits, tea for four dollars and a half, and salt butter, cheese and ham for four bits a pound. Colonial produce was reasonable, sugar being less than a bit; cotton three bits and coffee a bit and a half a pound. Clothing, other than the ordinary dress made in the colony, was excessively high, a common dress coat being two Joes and a half (nearly £5) a shirt six dollars, a hat one Joe, and a pair of boots seven dollars.

While Demerara and Essequibo had been progressing by leaps, poor Berbice was slowly crawling along. It is true that the remove down the river had been made, but nothing had been done to induce immigration. Notwithstanding that the example of Essequibo and Demerara had been before them for fifty years, the authorities still went on in the same way. Bound down by an antiquated Charter and strict Regulations there was no room for progress except on particular lines. There were however signs of awakening, the infusion of new blood from 1781 to 1783 having stirred up the colonists a little, and had it not been for that unfortunate revocation of French and English grants, no doubt the coast lands would have been taken up to some considerable extent. As it was, however, the remove from the upper district had just begun in 1796, a few cotton plantations on the coast being in course of clearing, or with the young plants just shooting up among the tree-stumps. As in Demerara, there were comparatively few sugar plantations, and these were almost entirely in the hands of the Association, it requiring a larger



capital and double the number of slaves per acre as compared with coffee or cotton. Head taxes having been paid on 8,232 negroes for the year 1795, the population may be estimated at about 10,000, against 60,000 in the neighbouring colony.

There were a few English planters in the colony, among them being LAMBERT BLAIR, who had lately taken up several concessions on the coast for cotton plantations. He afterwards became one of the most wealthy and important gentleman in Berbice, and the inveterate enemy of Governor VAN BATENBURG.

Up the Canje Creek were a few Cacao plantations; this being the only place in the three rivers where that tender shrub would flourish to perfection. One of the estates in that district yielded annually ten thousand pounds of Cacao, besides a hundred and forty thousand pounds of coffee, by the labour of two hundred slaves.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### *CAPTURE BY THE BRITISH, 1796.*

The rivers virtually blockaded—Expedition to capture them—Terms offered and accepted—The British force takes possession—Origin of Kingston—Meeting of the Council—Oath of allegiance taken—Councillors object to Militia fighting an outside enemy—Negro and Volunteer Corps raised, the first against the protest of the Councillors—Financial Representatives established—Increase of trade after the capture—Town improvements—Roads and bridges—Defensive measures of the British—Financial difficulties—Soldiers refuse to be jailors for the chain gang—Want of interest in elections—Decay of the capital of Essequibo—Post Office established—Royal Essequibo and Demerary Gazette—Dr. Pinckard's account of the Volunteers—Moroco Post attacked by Spaniards—"Princess Changuion."

**A**T the beginning of the year 1796, the French Directory was so busily employed on the continent of Europe, as to be unable to do much to protect the Dutch Colonies, of which they had now a great number virtually in their possession. Although nominally a separate state, the Batavian Republic was as much under French control as if it were really a part of France. At first, as we have seen in the last chapter, Great Britain offered to take the Dutch Colonies under her protection, but as the authorities in Guiana refused to accept such an offer, preparations for conquest were now made. It was generally admitted at the time that the Governor of Barbados was invited by the English and Orange party to take possession of Demerara, the condition of the colony being quite desperate. As it was utterly impossible for either the Batavian Republic or France to protect the mercantile fleets of the colonists against Great Britain, trade was at a stand-still, hardly a vessel daring

to cross the Atlantic in face of the strong naval force of the enemy. In such straits it was no wonder that even many of the old-fashioned Dutchmen wished again to have the colony put into communication with the rest of the world. Up to the last few months, a considerable trade had been carried on with Barbados, many of the inhabitants of that island being proprietors of estates in Demerara, so that it was naturally felt as a great hardship when this communication was suddenly stopped.

Sir RALPH ABERCROMBY, who was then Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in the West Indies, without waiting for a formal declaration of war on the part of the Batavian Republic, asked Admiral Sir JOHN LAFOREY, early in April 1796 to provide a naval force so that he might detach a body of troops for the capture of Demerara. Accordingly, on the 15th of the same month, a fleet consisting of H.M.S. *Malabar*, *La Pique*, *Babet*, and the Grenada transport, with a number of small vessels, including some of light draught for shallow waters, and 1,200 men, left Barbados and arrived off the Demerara river on the 20th. The following day, everything being in readiness, a large contingent of the troops embarked on board the smaller vessels under orders to land on the East coast and attack the fort and town from behind. This project was however frustrated by an accident, the sloops running aground, where they lay open to attack until floated off by the tide. The English fleet meanwhile anchored in the channel in sight of the fort, shipping, and the Dutch man-of-war *Thetis*, the inhabitants watching this imposing force with different feelings as they happened to belong to the Orange or Tricolor party.

The mouth of the river Demerara being thus blockaded, an officer was sent under a flag of truce, with a letter to the Governor demanding the surrender of the colony. In case this was done quietly and peaceably the inhabitants

were promised full security to their persons and private property, (except such as were French subjects) and free exercise of their religion, according to their ancient laws and usages. In the event of the colonies remaining under British government at the conclusion of a peace, they would enjoy the same commercial rights and privileges as the British Colonies in the West Indies. If the officers and men of the military forces were willing to enter His Majesty's service, they would be allowed to do so, with leave to return to that of the Stadtholder on his restoration. Upon their taking the oath of allegiance to serve His Britannic Majesty during the war, soldiers and non-commissioned officers would receive a bounty of a hundred guilders, and officers two hundred days' bat, baggage and forage money. The Governor and all civil officers, after taking the oath, might remain if they chose, in their respective positions, (excepting those who had shown a decided partiality to the French) the Governor resigning only the military command. Major-General *WHYTE* and Captain *PARR* gave the Governor one hour to accept or refuse these conditions after which, he, the Council and all concerned would be answerable for the consequences, as an immediate attack would be made.

In reply to this peremptory demand, Governor *BEAUJON* wrote that it was out of his power to give an answer without consulting the Council, which he would call together, and communicate the result about twelve o'clock. The flag of truce returned with this answer about eight o'clock on the 22nd, by which time the sloops had all floated off the mud and returned to the ships. The messenger was again sent ashore with another letter granting the request of the Governor, and returned between ten and eleven with an answer signed by the Governor and five Councillors, stating that they had attentively perused the summons, and after mature deliberation had resolved to accept the

proposed terms, leaving the officers and troops to decide for themselves as to the offers made to them.

At four in the afternoon the British troops landed at Fort William Frederick, when the Dutch garrison marched out, and possession was taken without a single shot having been fired by either party. Most of the British soldiers were suffering from the confinement of a long voyage from Cork to Barbados, and when they were landed in Demerara in the midst of a swamp during a drenching shower, as might be expected, a great number was soon on the sick list. One of the first matters that required attention was hospital accommodation, and this was provided in the coffee logie of Pln. *La Bourgade*, not far from where Holmes Stelling is now situated. Then came the difficulty of procuring fresh meat, of which the whole colony could not supply enough for such a large contingent of troops. The only thing that could be procured in large quantity was fruit, and here there was a surplus. Every estate's dam was covered with fruit trees, so that oranges could be procured for the asking, Mr. MEERTENS the attorney of Pln. *Wlissingen* offering as many as the hospital might require.

The offer of the British Commanders was accepted by the Dutch soldiers, the whole contingent entering into His Majesty's service under the name of the Loyal Orange Battalion, while, to provide accommodation for all the troops, preparations were at once made for new barracks near the fort. Here a suburb rose very quickly, and about a month after the surrender of the colony it became of so much importance as to receive the name of Kingston.

A special meeting of the Council was convened on the 25th of April at the request of Major-General WHITE, who then formally took his seat as President. He was introduced by Councillors LUYKEN and CUMING, and the Secretary, and received at the top of the stairs by Governor BEAUJON, who asked him to preside and then seated himself

on his right. The Major-General asked the Council if they were satisfied with the capitulation, or wished to have any point elucidated, as he was willing to interpret the articles favourably to the inhabitants before they took the oath of allegiance. The respective Councillors in reply said that they were ready to take the oath as soon as it was explained to them. The Major-General not having a form of oath with him, the Councillors showed him a copy of that of 1781, which was taken for consideration, until the following day.

On the 26th a form of oath was placed before them, which the Major-General thought it their duty to take. They were to be true and faithful to His Britannic Majesty, as well as the Governor or Commander of the troops, and give information of any sedition that might come to their knowledge. Governor BEAUJON, on behalf of the Council, then declared that it had always been in accordance with the law that private citizens should not be bound to take up arms against external enemies, and in accordance with the capitulation they claimed this exemption. The Major-General having replied that he should always respect the laws of the colony, the oath was taken at once. Mr. PLETNER, who had been *ad interim* Commandeur of Essequibo in the absence of ALBERTUS BAKKER, wished to resign, but at the request of the Major-General he agreed to remain "for the present." It was then resolved that a publication be issued calling on all the principal inhabitants and the Burgher Captains to repair to Stabroek and take the oath, after which the latter could administer it to others in their respective districts. Some alterations in the constitution having been made the previous year, by the assumption of two extraordinary Councillors, it was now decided that the Plan of Redress should be strictly followed in future, the Council to consist of the Governor, Commandeur, two Fiscals, and two Colonial Councillors from each river.

The Militia Regulations, under which the colonists claimed that they were not bound to fight against external enemies, did not please the Major-General, and to get over the difficulty he proposed to the Council on the 4th of May that five hundred negroes should be embodied to assist in protecting the colony. Most of the Councillors objected to trusting negroes with arms, Mr. PLETTNER thinking a body of Indians would be better. Others saw no objection if the negroes were detached to various parts together with a majority of white soldiers, so that they could be overpowered if necessary. The Governor said the objection appeared to be against the arming of such a number of blacks. This would apply to whites as well, who in abuse of their strength might prove equally dangerous, but by the maintenance of good discipline and strict order, there would always be sufficient security for the preservation of public tranquility.

On the 10th of June the matter was again considered. Major-General WYTE having left the colony, the Military command devolved on Colonel HYSLOP, who pressed forward the necessity of arming, clothing, and disciplining the Negro Corps, which he proposed to call the first battalion of "South American Rangers," and to dignify with the title of the "Prince of Wales' Own." Councillors CUMING and MEERTENS were of opinion that such a measure would be very dangerous, as it would tend to rekindle the ardent desire of many of the other negroes for unlimited freedom, by which their minds had long been kept in agitation. The raising of this Corps would give them the opportunity of attempting to corrupt their armed fellow slaves, with very pernicious consequences, as five hundred well-armed men, strengthened by some thousands of ill-disposed negroes would find means to ruin and destroy the colony. In support of this they adduced the fact that a small number of maroons, but poorly provided with arms and ammunition,

had been able the previous year to raise a strong party among the plantation negroes. As to the suggestions that a corps of white soldiers, if inclined to abuse their strength, might be fully as dangerous as the proposed corps, and that such negroes had done good service in the Islands, these could easily be answered. White soldiers in general had a moral sense of punishment, and above all of death, whereas the negroes, especially the new comers, did not look on death as a heavy punishment, from the notion that they came to life again in their own country and were then united to their own relations. Again, white soldiers, contending for their fellow citizens, were less open to suspicion, whereas the negroes would be called to fight for white men, who they considered as enemies because they kept them in slavery. Negroes, being instructed in the use of arms, would soon be familiar with fighting against white men, and might easily be led, after some success, to conceive the bold project of exerting all their efforts to resist their white masters and obtain unlimited freedom, a project which had not hitherto entered into their heads. In the actual position of affairs the proposed measure would be attended with more danger in this colony than in any other, on account of the uncertainty as to whether at the conclusion of a general peace it would or would not be restored to the Dutch Republic. If the first alternative should occur, the existence of such a force would cause great apprehension, on account of the small number of troops which the Netherlands would probably be able to supply for the colony. The good conduct of negro troops in other places afforded no sufficient reason for their orderly behaviour here, because the slaves in the two rivers were not deterred from struggling after liberty by any fatal consequences whatever. In the islands, on the contrary, the slaves had themselves witnessed the dreadful horrors and atrocities which attended unlimited freedom, especially in



the French settlements, some of them, it was even said, having been sold to the Spaniards by the very men who pretended to have delivered them, while others miserably perished in the horrors of famine, or were forced by want to return to their old masters. It was not to be wondered at therefore that, having lost all relish for unlimited freedom, they preferred to remain in that state of servitude which was so impatiently borne here by negroes who had not tasted the bitter fruits of liberty. In the islands also there were more creole or native negroes than in this colony, which had only lately been making any progress; and consequently had a greater number of Africans. These latter were not actuated by the same principles as the creoles, who, from living among white people, commonly imbibed some notions of morality which influenced them with a stronger aversion to the punishment of death. It would be easy to quell an insurrection in an island, where the insurgents could be surrounded and hemmed in on all sides, as well as easily deprived of all means of obtaining provisions, while here, what with the natural productions in the woods, and their inaccessibility to white persons, they would have a secure asylum. When there were great numbers armed and skulking in the recesses of the forest, even Indians could hardly be prevailed upon to exterminate them, while it was well known that these were the only people who could be successfully employed against run-aways. The arming of a corps of negroes had become absolutely necessary in the islands, where hundreds of slaves had taken up arms against their masters, but such an extremity by no means existed here. They must also observe that the arming of negroes to repel an external invasion might be attended with the most pernicious and destructive consequences for the colony and endanger the lives and property of the planters. It was an acknowledged truth that when a country was conquered all persons found

in arms were by law of war treated like the regular military, especially when they had voluntarily taken up arms, as would be the case here, it not being denied that the inhabitants by their ancient privileges and constitution were exempted from marching against an external enemy. Therefore, if they should furnish negroes for a service of this kind they might be considered as having voluntarily taken up arms, since it amounted to the same thing whether the service was performed by themselves or their negroes. It evidently followed that if the country was unexpectedly assailed from abroad, and overwhelmed by a superior force, such conduct on the part of the inhabitants would be construed into a voluntary act of hostility and draw on them the most calamitous consequences. In conclusion, it was the opinion of the two Councillors that the proposed black corps should not be embodied, but they had no objection to raise the present number to a hundred, to be commanded by able white officers, and employed for internal defence. After listening to these objections, the Governor said all they had to do was to consider how five hundred negroes could be raised. He suggested that owners of 51 to 150 slaves, including women and children, be required to furnish one able and faithful negro man, these possessing 151 to 250, two, 251 to 350, three, and so on in proportion, accurate returns to be sent in to the Burgher Captains and affirmed on oath.

The Colonial Councillors then said that since the matter had been already determined by a higher authority, there was no room for further deliberation. The proposed method of raising the number, appeared the best that could be adopted, they would therefore make no difficulty in acquiescing to the Governor's proposals. A Publication was therefore issued on the 2nd of August, and the South American Rangers were embodied soon afterwards.

Another matter which caused some dissatisfaction, was

a renewal of the dispute as to the right of the popular representatives to control the expenditure from the Colonial Chest. It will be remembered that under the old system there were two separate treasuries, that of the Company and that of the Colony. The old tax of a dollar on each negro, went into the Company's (now King's) Chest, while a second head-tax, which varied according to circumstances, had gradually grown to be an institution under the name of the Colony taxes. As we have seen the Colonial representatives objected to allow the latter to be controlled by the official section, and latterly had succeeded in obtaining four of the Keisheers to combine with them in voting as to the amount of the Colonial taxes and how they were to be spent.

The Governor appears to have been desirous of putting the two Chests on the same footing—but did not insist on this—and excluding the Keisheers from what had been the Combined Court. The matter came up on the 15th of May, when the Colonial Councillors declared that the Finance Department ought to be continued. On the 10th of June the Governor stated that he had not yet convened the Department since the surrender as it could not be considered as one of the ancient laws and usages in accordance with the Articles of Capitulation, and that it was an erroneous opinion to suppose that all other laws in force previous to the surrender should be respected. However lawful this establishment may have been it was only provisional, and had never been sanctioned by the Sovereign, their High Mightinesses by resolution of the 11th of April 1795 ordering that everything of that kind should remain as provisional. He now proposed that for the purpose of raising the Colonial Taxes, six persons be adjoined to the Council of Policy.

The Colonial Councillors then laid over a Memorial, to explain what they considered their rights. According to

the constitution the Government consisted of four civil officers and four representatives of the planters. The latter had very little influence on account of the casting vote of the Governor, so that when, as happened under Governor GROVESTINS, he was supported by the other officers, the colony was saddled with expenses that the Colonial Councillors maintained should never have been charged against it. The capitation tax was now  $f3.10$  for each working slave,  $f1$  for children between three and twelve years  $f7$  for tradesmen, and higher rates for domestic servants; besides this there was two and a half per cent. import duty, six per cent. produce duty, half of which was remitted on proof of the goods being landed in the United Provinces, five per cent. on provisions imported in neutral vessels, and finally a tonnage duty of  $f3$  per last both inwards and outwards. The provision and tonnage duties had not been exacted for several months past because the Americans had threatened to come no more if these were enforced, and provisions being very scarce the Council had suspended them. All these taxes belonged to the Government or King's fund. As to the other, the *Cas van Colonie Onkosten*, it varied according to circumstances, and was applied to keeping the capital in repair, roads and bridges, expenses of justice, ministers, schoolmaster, compensation for negroes, &c. Governor GROVESTINS had charged the Colony fund with so many payments that the Colonial Councillors felt much aggrieved, as they thought it could never have been intended that four public servants should be allowed to dispose of the taxes in such an arbitrary manner. On account of the enormous expenses connected with the suppression of the slave revolt the previous year, all of which was to be paid from the taxes, two Kiesheers from each river were called into consultation, which action was afterwards confirmed by Governor BEAUJON. The Colonial Councillors felt confident that in establishing the

Financial Department, the Council had not acted on any arbitrary or revolutionary principles, but were induced to it by the confusion in Holland which prevented positive orders from that quarter. It was not founded on any Resolution of the Revolutionary Committee, but rather the result of GROVESTINS' attempts to deprive the colony of its rights. The Council had the right, in extraordinary cases, to make provisional arrangements until the pleasure of their superiors was known, and in this case they were justified by GROVESTINS' instructions as well as expediency and justice. The Governor, by his casting vote, could impose any tax he pleased, and it would be no argument to say that public servants would not undertake things against the interest of the colony. Experience proved otherwise, some public servants who differed from GROVESTINS being publicly reprimanded and complained of to their High Mightinesses, while foreigners sent here as officials committed many errors through ignorance. They opposed any change in the Department without orders from the supreme authority or consent of the inhabitants.

Notwithstanding the protest it was resolved that the Resolution of the 23rd of June 1795, relative to the Colonial Finance Department and its appurtenances, be "abolished and annihilated." Then followed the minute on which the Financial College of to-day is founded, which runs as follows :—

"The Court then further considering that it would be consistent with equity and justice, to allow the inhabitants a more complete representation with regard to the imposing of taxes, than the number of four Colonial Councillors, and considering likewise that this measure is not alien to the British Constitution : Be it resolved, that in lieu of the Kiesheers, who in that capacity have no mandate to represent the inhabitants in financial concerns, there shall be adjoined to the Governor and Council of Policy, six inhabitants of these colonies, three of Essequibo and three of Demerara, who are to exercise the right of voting in all matters relative to the raising of taxes and examination of accounts, without any other function, and who are to continue in that

situation for two years, at the expiration of which a new election is again to take place. Further, with regard to the mode of electing the said Representatives; the same shall be observed as takes place at the election of Kiesheers, according to what has been determined upon that matter in the Plan of Provisional Reform &c., in such manner that each and every inhabitant who possesses 25 slaves shall give his vote contained in a note signed by him, within thirty days from the date of publication, on the expiration of which term the votes shall be opened by the Governor in presence of two Councillors of Policy, and the persons who have carried the majority of votes shall be duly appointed. And, as the Kiesheers are in consequence no more to be present at the sittings of this Court, it is resolved that the Court of Policy shall again finally dispose of the Colonial fund, and that in urgent cases during the Court's recess, the immediate disposition of the fund shall be entrusted to the Governor. But, whereas the records of the Court often allude to the Colony fund having been burthened by former Governors with several charges and disbursements, which the Colonial Councillors asserted could not be paid out of the Colonial fund, but ought to be paid from the Government fund, it is resolved, in consideration of the circumstance, and with the concurrence and approbation of the Governor, that in order to prevent once for all any difference of opinion on that subject the same shall be taken into serious consideration by the respective members, and that a future resolution shall be determined on if necessary, under gracious approbation from a higher quarter, tending as far as will be possible to ascertain what objects of expenditure are or are not payable out of the Colonial fund, in order to establish some fixed regulations on that head, to be invariably adhered to in all the common course of affairs, the whole of these resolutions to be thus determined upon until His Britannic Majesty's pleasure, or that of his representatives thereunto qualified, shall be known."

A Publication was ordered, calling on the inhabitants to elect such representatives as appeared to them most deserving of confidence, and on the 25th of July the first Financial Representatives were declared to be elected.\* Among them was CHRISTOPHER WATERTON, uncle of the traveller, who under the Dutch rule would have been

\* In this way the dispute with regard to the control of the Colony Chest was disposed of for a time, but it does not appear that the authorities ever got to the bottom of the question. It is really very simple; the Colonial taxes were imposed by general consent for particular purposes, at first as an extra head-tax, and when in 1784 the Company wanted to put it on the same footing as the old head-tax, the people absolutely refused to pay it at all. The Committee which formulated the proposed Plan of Redress left the matter open, being apparently unable to deal with it, but

ineligible for office from the fact that he was a Roman Catholic.

Immediately after the surrender to the English, the river was crowded with shipping from the Islands, and as a natural consequence a great impetus was given to the trade of the colony. A good number of vessels were captured, and some of the shippers experienced heavy losses, but notwithstanding this, very few complaints were heard except from a few extremists of the republican faction.

What is now the ward of Newtown, had already become a suburb of Stabroek, but up to the present was only occupied by a few American traders. The land, like other portions of Pln. *Vlissingen*, was leased from the executors of the estate of JOSEPH BOURDA, who could not sell it on account of the provisions of that gentleman's will. On the 11th of June JOHN BODKIN petitioned the Court of Policy for permission to open a Coffee House at the corner of the landing place in the new town (America Stelling) which was granted, provided he conformed to the rules and regulations of Tavern Keepers. At the same time he asked to be appointed Ferryman, but this was left over for further consideration. In July BOBWEGAN, who had been working the Demerara Ferry for some time previous, asked for permission to sell the house, boats, &c., of the ferry, when it was decided that he had no claim to a vested right, but might sell his own property. It was then resolved to offer all the ferries for public tender, to be farmed to the highest bidder.

The farmer of every ferry would be bound to construct and keep in repair proper landing places on both sides of

refused to allow the tax to go into the Company's Chest. Later, when the two Chests were merged in one and a Civil List was guaranteed, the planters did not appear to understand that this Civil List was nothing more than a continuation of the King's (formerly Company's) Chest, over which the Court of Policy never had the least control. It follows therefore that under the constitution of British Guiana, neither the Court of Policy nor the Combined Court has any right to withhold their consent to the Civil List in its entirety, although they may perhaps be able to reduce it to the amount of the King's taxes as they existed in the year preceding their abolition.

the river, not higher up than they were, that of the Demerara to be near the town, the landings to be broad enough for a four-wheeled carriage and two horses. The ferry boat was to be at least 26 ft. long by 12 ft. broad, so as to accommodate a four-wheeled carriage, and besides this, there was to be a smaller boat always in readiness for ordinary passengers. On the Demerara two large ferry boats were to be provided, thirty ft. long, one to be posted on each side of the river, with sails, as well as two tent boats of twenty feet keel with four oars and a rudder to each, properly manned. One of the latter was to start every two hours, from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., after ringing a bell, and was allowed to carry six passengers, who should pay; if white  $f2\cdot15$ , free coloured  $f1\cdot10$ , slaves  $f1$ , or if the last carried a trunk or packall  $f1\cdot10$ . A horse was charged  $f5\cdot10$ , a two-wheeled carriage and one horse  $f8\cdot5$ , a four-wheeled with two horses  $f13\cdot10$ , and horned cattle  $f5\cdot10$  per head. On the Mahaica and Mahaicony ferries, a white man was to pay 5 stivers and a free coloured or slave  $2\frac{1}{2}$  stivers, while a horse cost  $f1$  and two-wheeled and four-wheeled vehicles with horses  $f1\cdot10$  and  $f2$ . All officials and persons on Government business were to be free. Some difficulty was experienced in getting tenders; Mahaicony ferry obtained one offer only, this being  $f400$  per annum, and was granted at  $f500$ , while Mahaica, was competed for by some of the neighbouring planters, who ran it up to  $f6,210$ , and had afterwards to ask the Court to relieve them of their bad bargain, as the gross returns did not amount to as much as the rent. The Court had afterwards to lend money to the lessee of the Demerara ferry, before it could be put on a proper footing and even then the ferryman was obliged to petition them not to press him for the interest.

On the 27th of July, the Governor stated that on account of the increase in the population of Stabroek, as well as



the number of Military garrisoned therein, it was absolutely necessary to repair and improve the middle foot-path, (Brick-Dam) he had therefore directed that materials should be purchased and paid for from the Town funds. To carry out this work, as well as to look after the dams, bridges, lights, and fire engines, the Court appointed L. F. SCHRIEBVOGEL as Surveyor, at a salary of *f*1,200, to be paid from the Town funds. The "Surveyor of the Town" petitioned in November for an allowance for house rent, which was granted to the amount of *f*400 per annum, provided he gave room for the fire engines and town implements. A Publication was made on the 3rd of October, stating that :—

"Whereas every means is being tried to put the town in better order, all the inhabitants are ordered to clean their concessions, and the space in front of them, as far as the brick pavement, agreeable to the laws and regulations in force, within eight days, on pain of the fine.

"The inhabitants are also required, for the improvement of the town now intended, to hire out for the use of the town, one or more negroes, to be paid for from the town funds, and to apply to the Town Inspector, L. F. SCHRIEBVOGEL."

As may be seen by the arrangements for the ferries, the old Government, backed by British influence, did a great deal towards putting matters on a sound footing. After the town and ferries naturally came the roads and bridges, the Publication being dated November 3rd. "Taking into consideration (it says) the increasing wealth and prosperity of these colonies, and the benefit the inhabitants would derive from the public roads, also the considerable increase of late in the number of carriages and horses, and the making of several new roads in Mahaicony, Abary, &c., we have found it necessary to amend the law as to roads." The new roads were to be 22 ft. broad, with 7 ft. parapets on each side, the middle to be 2 ft. and the side 1 ft. higher than the level of the parapets. Bridges, kokers and sluices were to be 12 ft. wide, the only exceptions being those already made, which however must be at least 10 ft.;

the whole to be completed in two years. A Publication of the following day ordered the planters and inhabitants to keep their horses, cattle, &c., within the limits of their estates or grounds, strays being taken to the "Croner," who would not restore them without payment of certain fees, and sell them if they were not redeemed. No person was to shoot any animal except goats or hogs, and these only after giving proper notice to the owner of such intention ; further no animals were to graze on the public road.

As the Militia stood on their rights, in refusing to fight against external foes, efforts were made to raise a volunteer force, with success as far as the English inhabitants were concerned. Colonel HYSLOP, being now Commander of the forces in the two rivers, made every possible arrangement for their defence. In July he wrote to the Governor and Court calling their attention to the danger of an attack from the enemy during the coming hurricane season. He would take every precaution, but was afraid that they might be overwhelmed by superior numbers. Considering the dreadful consequences entailed by an invasion, the many lives which must inevitably be sacrificed in the contest, and the horrors of plunder, rapine and murder, which most probably would succeed in extinguishing some families and properties, energetic measures must be immediately taken to obviate such a calamity. The Court could do very little, everything being hampered by the want of money. The first Combined Court under the new regulations met on the 2nd of November, when the financial situation was considered. From the enormous expenses of the insurrection and bush expeditions of the previous year the Colony Chest was in debt to the amount of over £95,000, while it was intimated that £59,000 more was required, besides some other expenses which had not yet been exactly ascertained. It was agreed that the Colonial head-tax should be fixed at £4.10 on all plantation slaves, in-

cluding even sucking infants, and *f*9 for domestic servants and tradesman. On account of the scarcity of coin the Receiver would be permitted to take payment in either ready money, good bills of exchange, claims on the Colonial Chest, or promissory notes. The last would be payable in produce, could only be received from owners of plantations, and were to be negotiated as paper money at full value, every one being bound to accept them as legal tender. Two days afterwards the Court considered the difficulty of settling with the Indians who had helped in suppressing the insurrection, some of whom had already applied for payment on two occasions, and had to be sent away for want of funds. It was decided that those actually engaged must bring some proof of the fact, on which a Captain or Chief would be paid two or three Joes and each man one Joe, or the value in wares, each to sign his name or mark in presence of a witness.

Colonel HYSLOP suggested that Indians might be embodied to help in the defence of the colony, but nothing came of this. In a letter to the Court, read November 4th, he made several suggestions for the same purpose. He thought that the plantation negroes might be utilised under the direction of their masters. It was necessary that some general and uniform system be adopted, which could be arranged at meetings of the planters in the houses of the Burgher Officers. They might secure the fidelity of the slaves by promising protection to their wives and children, and carry this out by bringing these to town or camp; then put the slaves under their managers, and keep them ready to give assistance where needed. "By the mode in which the enemy had carried on war in the West Indies, (he said) in every instance the people who should have protected the colonies have destroyed them, because they were abandoned by their proprietors and left open to the seduction of the enemy, whose infernal principles are cal-

culated to lead away the uninformed, on which their chief hope of success depends." Requisitions for slaves to repair the Fort and work at the defences had been made soon after the capitulation, but the Colonel said the number contributed was very short; where a hundred had been ordered only sixteen being sent, and as the need was very pressing he must insist upon regular supplies. The Court agreed to all these measures. On the 8th of June it was reported that some of the chain gang negroes had escaped from the Fort, where the British Commander had lately released them from their fetters, on the ground of humanity. As the troops could not be employed as jailors, it was suggested that a house should be provided in Stabroek where they could be confined, and fitted up with stocks, &c., as a prison. It was finally resolved that they should be removed from the Fort as soon as possible, and that, as it would be difficult to prevent their escape, the Fiscal should try to sell them out of the colony, meanwhile a white jailor was appointed at a salary of twelve hundred guilders. This appears to have been the first project for a jail, and as there was considerable difficulty in disposing of criminal slaves in other places, it may be presumed that the prisoners were retained. At the same meeting the Fiscal reported that one of the Dieners or constables had been dismissed, and, as it was difficult to get another *white* man, he wanted to employ one or more free coloured men, especially to apprehend negroes. This was agreed to, provided they were never employed to arrest white people.

The Commandeur of Essequibo reported on the same date that at the last election of a Kiesheer, so little interest was taken that only four votes were found in the box. Even when chosen the Electors often refused to sit, from which he feared that this part of the constitution would eventually grow out of use. It was resolved that a Publication be issued in Essequibo, earnestly exhorting the

people not to neglect this part of their lawful constitution, as in case they failed, the Court would have to take necessary steps to maintain the Constitutional Laws. On July the 31st in the following year the Governor told the meeting that persons elected to the Courts were continually refusing to accept office on various pretexts, so that it became more and more difficult to fill the vacancies. A Publication had been made as long before as May the 20th, 1778, inflicting a fine for refusal, but this had entirely failed in remedying the evil. It was resolved that the old Publication be renovated, altered or amended so that any person nominated by the Kiesheers should be bound to discharge the duties of the office during the whole term, on pain of a fine of *f*3,000, unless he should have lawful and satisfactory excuse in the judgment of that body to which he was elected.\* The following day a memorial from the College of Keisheers of Essequebo was read, complaining of the great inconvenience caused by the want of accommodation on Fort Island, both for them and the Court of Justice during the sessions. The Commandeur was directed to purchase a house and provide a superintendent, in the same manner as in Demerara. The establishment on Fort Island had by this time almost gone to ruin. Commandeur ALBERTUS BACKER returned to the colony on August 2nd, 1796, thus relieving the *ad interim* official, who had got tired of his acting appointment and was only prevented resigning at the request of the Governor. An attempt was made to get the capital removed, H. HELMERS, part proprietor of the Upper Point of Leguan requesting, on the 28th July, 1796, that the Court would be favourable to the wishes of the inhabitants and remove the capital to Leguan, which if they agreed to he would give up a part of his land for the purpose. The Court were not favourable to a

\* Fines of *f*600 and *f*400, were also imposed for refusing the offices of Sergeant and Corporal in the Militia without good and sufficient excuse.

change at that time but the Essequibo Councillors expressed themselves in favour of Leguan as being undoubtedly the best and most convenient place if any alterations were made.

The want of a Post Office was considered on the 11th of June, 1796, Lieutenant-Colonel HYSLOP representing to the Court that it was absolutely necessary to establish regular communication to the army, by weekly boats to and from Barbados. After deliberation it was resolved "that in consideration of the extensive use and benefit to be derived from such an establishment, to the community at large, a Post Office shall be established in Stabroek at the expense of the colony, and under the management of a proper person, who shall receive an annual salary of *f*1,200."

Hitherto the Mail bags from the Netherlands had been received and distributed from the Secretary's Office, a charge of a guilder for each letter being imposed, while ship letters and those from England *via* Barbados were generally delivered by the Captains or consignees of the vessels. It was now decided that the Postmaster should charge five stivers for each letter, and that in future all masters of British vessels should deliver their bags at the Post Office, no vessel being allowed to enter or clear until the bags were delivered or collected; it was also resolved to hire a Packet Boat to carry the Mails to Barbados.

Another important innovation was a printing press and an official gazette. The primitive method of sending round a written copy of a Proclamation, to be read and then passed on, must have rather surprised the British Commander. On the 8th of June the Governor informed the Court that Lieutenant-Colonel HYSLOP had expressed a desire that a printing press should be established, which would be not only a great convenience to him in sending orders to the Military posts, but would also be of general use and benefit to the Government and inhabitants. The Gov-

error therefore proposed that a printing press should be established, the expense of which would be paid jointly from the Colony and Government funds, and that a proper person be engaged on an annual salary, who should be bound to print all public documents for the Government and Courts, he being also allowed to print for the inhabitants for his own profit. There was an opportunity of obtaining a press then in the possession of Mrs. VOLKEERTS\*, if she would be willing to part with it. After deliberation the Court resolved that the Governor be asked to enquire of Mrs. VOLKEERTS whether she would be willing to sell the press, and if so at what price? also to send to Barbados for an able printer at a salary of from fifty to sixty Joes.

Two days afterwards the Governor reported that Mrs. VOLKEERTS was willing to sell the press for f2,200, together with all the type and belongings, which offer was accepted, subject to the approval of the printer, who was expected to arrive soon. Two printers named ELLIS and Cox arrived in the colony shortly afterwards and started the *Royal Essequibo and Demerary Gazette* in September following. The contribution from the Colonial Chest was 352 guilders, (\$140.80), which with an equal sum from the King's Chest and the salary would give the the two printers about \$94 a month, besides what they might obtain from advertisements and job printing.

Dr. PINCKARD mentions the newspaper, the new corps of volunteers and the black corps in a letter dated September 12th, 1796, as follows :—

“ The return of our comrades to England gives me an opportunity of sending you the first copy of a new periodical paper just published in this colony called the *Demerara Gazette*. You will find from the composition, no less than from the printing, and the paper, that it is quite an original : but as you are a merciful man, I confide in you not distressing the editors of the London papers by exhibiting to them, or the English public the *superiority* of our *South American Gazette*.

\* This was the same press and type which had been used by J. C. de la Coste in printing the first newspaper.

“ But what will you say of our growing importance when I tell you, that we have not only a newspaper established, to afford us the commercial advantages of a speedy intercourse, and a strong regiment of black rangers raised for the defence of the colony, but that we have also a Colonial corps formed from among the respectable part of the inhabitants, for the mutual protection of each other's property, and for the general defence of the settlement. I wish you could witness the grotesque scene of this corps going to parade, with many of the gentlemen indulging in the indolence of climate, by having slaves to carry their firelocks, belts, cartouch boxes, and the like. You would be apt to suggest comparisons between the warlike troops of Austria or Russia, and these languid soldiers of the West Indies. I am occasionally very much amused on meeting a fat robust figure, feathered out with scarlet and blue uniform, and strutting to the parade with a little negro boy behind him to support the fatiguing weight of his firelock. A few days since I passed one of these fattened warriors, who went puffing and blowing through the mud, and wiping the heated streams from his brows as if quite oppressed with the heavy mass of his own person; while a slim little shade of a negro, scarcely up to his hip, quietly followed at his heel, bending under the weight of his arms and accoutrements. It was a fine burlesque upon the sturdy hardihood, and the rigid endurance of a military life—yet, when assembled, the Demerara corps makes a respectable and soldier-like appearance, and would no doubt be essentially useful were occasion to call for its services.”

In another letter, referring to a review of the military force on the Queen's birth-day, January 18th, 1797, he says :—

“ They were of different nations, different colours, and different uniform, yet from the excellent discipline instilled among them by the unwearied attentions of the commandant and the officers, their appearance in the field was highly military, and their manœuvres executed with much of order and correctness. The line, if not formidable, was very respectable. On the right were the British troops and the corps of Demerara volunteers, in scarlet uniform : on the left were the Dutch, in blue : in the centre the fine battalion of South American rangers, in white : and, on each wing a party of the Royal Artillery.”

The Queen's birth-day was kept up in Stabroek with the usual festivities—a banquet for the gentlemen and a ball for the ladies—when Dr. PINCKARD could not help noticing the activity of the latter as compared with their ordinary languor and want of energy. Before daylight in



the morning, although the party only provided one lady to three gentlemen, the heroes were obliged to succumb, probably on account of their more liberal potations.

Supposing that the small garrison of Moroco would be overcome by the festivities, a party of Spaniards (who it must be remembered were allies of the French) attempted to surprise that post the following day. Captain ROCHELLE and the garrison of Dutch troops, who had entered the British service, were not found napping however, but on the contrary very much on the alert, so that when the enemy made a rush to storm the post they met with a very warm reception. Some were killed, others wounded, while the remainder hurried to their boats, and fled ignominiously. None of the garrison were killed, but Captain ROCHELLE and nine others were wounded, some of them severely. Two Indians carried the news to town, where they arrived four days afterwards.

At the meeting of the Combined Court on the 3rd of August following, CHRISTOPHER WATERTON, proposed that a sum should be put on the estimate for Captain ROCHELLE and his gallant soldiers. The following day, on the representations of the Governor, that Captain ROCHELLE had been wounded in bravely repulsing the Spaniards, that his health had been in consequence seriously impaired, and that he had a large family to support, without any adequate means, the Court resolved that he be presented with fifteen hundred guilders, and that a like sum be distributed among the other officers and soldiers according to their rank and deserts.

Some considerable excitement was produced in March 1797, by the escape from jail of a free mulatress, who went by the name of PRINCESS FLORA, or PRINCESS CHANGUION. Dr. PINCKARD says :—

“ She was lately the favoured dulcinea of a person high in office ; and from circumstances having rendered her name the general theme, her crimes, her merits and her sufferings are warmly canvassed in every

society, and even those who never saw nor heard of her before, would seem, from their confident remarks, to be intimately acquainted with every particular of her history and conduct. As the tale is told, some dispute had arisen between a Dutch dame and this yellow *princess*, in which the white lady alleged some unjust accusation against the mulatto, and otherwise so ill-treated her as to provoke her to hold up her hand in a menacing manner; for which heinous offence the poor CHANGUION has been subjected to an arbitrary confinement, and sentenced to be further punished with a severe flogging—burning in the forehead—the loss of an ear—and banishment.”

The result of this severe sentence was a feeling of sympathy for the poor woman, and by some means or other, probably with the free use of bribes, she was assisted to escape during the night previous to the morning fixed for her degrading punishment. The authorities were at once up in arms, and on the 25th of March issued a Proclamation offering a thousand guilders reward for her apprehension, at the same time cautioning persons against harbouring her. But with all their efforts the *princess* could not be found, her friends managing to keep her out of the hands of the Fiscal, while the evasion of the sentence resulted in the disuse of such obsolete punishments in the future. In 1812 we find her advertising in Berbice that she had opened a house for the reception of gentlemen, under the title of the “Royal Hotel.”

## CHAPTER XX.

### *EFFECT OF BRITISH INFLUENCE, 1797—1802.*

Increase of trade and population—Werk-en-Rust burying ground—Market regulations—Custom House established—Roads and Bridges—Revd. F. McMahon appointed minister—Fort William Frederick repaired—Town improvements—Libraries—Public subscriptions—Lotteries—Schools—First “Show”—Advertisements—Extension of the town—Shipping notices—Currency—New Planters arrive with their slaves from the Islands—Produce of the three rivers—Expenses and returns of plantations—Value of produce—Development by British not Dutch—Hardships of both planter and slave.

**A**S may be seen in the preceding chapter, their capture by the British, gave a great impetus to the development of the three rivers. Immediately after the troops, came a fleet of merchant vessels, requiring store-houses for their merchandise, and shops for its sale. It therefore soon followed that the restrictions against stores in other places than Stabroek fell into disuse, and the town was extended on both sides along the banks of the river, to Vlissingen on the one hand and Werk-en-Rust on the other. Several mercantile firms of importance were now established, among them being that of McINROY and SANDBACH, which appears to have been concerned principally in importing “prime Gold Coast negroes.”

With the increase of population and the unfortunate importation of yellow fever, pressing need was soon felt for a proper burying ground. The matter having been ventilated, Mr. PLETTNER, attorney for the proprietors of Werk-en-Rust, attended the meeting of the Court of Policy of the 30th of January, 1797, and offered to sell a piece of land

measuring forty-two by sixty roods, having an area of over eight acres, for twenty thousand guilders, payable in two instalments. After PLETTNER left his proposal was considered, the price being thought enormous, but as the necessity for the burying ground was pressing, and as the piece of land lay to leeward of the town and was easy of access, they decided to offer half the amount. Mr. PLETTNER being called in and the proposal made to him, he asked until the morrow to consult the parties interested. Next day PLETTNER told the Court that the price offered was very small as he could get more by selling the land in lots, he would however take fifteen thousand guilders. The Court refused to go beyond their first offer, and after some little haggling the price was accepted, it being stipulated that the plot of land was to be well dammed and out of the way of the new roads. Governor BEAUJON and J. V. DE PAADVOOBT were then authorised to receive the transport and to make the necessary regulations with the grave digger, J. H. SILVOLD, as to fitting the place for the burial of whites, free coloured, and slaves. On September the 1st following, a Proclamation was issued, informing the inhabitants that the burying ground had been laid out into three separate divisions as abovementioned, and that it was forbidden to any one within the limits of the town (now including Vlissengen and Werk-en-Rust) to inter elsewhere on pain of a fine of five hundred guilders.

On the 31st of January, 1797, the Court of Policy took into consideration the increased scarcity of colony provisions, which was thought to arise from "the arbitrary arrangements of dealers and retailers, who seem to know no bounds, but are intent on raising more and more the prices of necessaries." Accordingly, a Publication was issued on the 1st of March, in which the Governor and Court of Policy stated that, "taking into account the increased cost of living in this colony, and being determined

to put a stop to this evil, we have thought proper to fix the prices of the following articles :—

1 lb Beef not higher than ...	...	...	12 stivers.
1 lb Mutton	„	...	10 „
1 lb Veal	„	...	15 „
1 lb Goat's Meat	„	...	8 „
A young Goat	„	...	f5 10 „
1 lb Pork	„	...	5 „
A Pig	„	...	f2 15 „
A Turkey Cock	„	...	f8 5 „
A Turkey Hen	„	...	f5 10 „
A Goose	„	...	f5 10 „
A Duck	„	...	f2 0 „
A large Capon	„	...	f1 15 „
A small Capon	„	...	f1 0 „
A Guinea Fowl	„	...	f2 0 „
A Hen or full-grown Fowl	...	...	f1 0 „
A Chicken	„	...	10 „
A dozen Eggs	„	...	18 „
Fresh Fish :			

Jacob Everts, (P) Queriman, Pourtonche, Bashaw, Mullet and Cartaback, a schelling and a half a pound.

All other kinds of Fish, 5 stivers per lb.

A loaf of Bread of one pound, 5 stivers.”

Every one was ordered to comply with this order on pain of a fine of a hundred guilders and confiscation of the goods, to be imposed on the buyer, seller or the procurer to be bought or sold, while slaves would receive corporeal punishment. Everything not sold in shops in Stabroek or at Fort Island was to be brought to the great market place in Essequibo, or to that at Stabroek between the public hospital and the Company's path,\* persons selling elsewhere being liable to a fine of f100, or if slaves, corporeal punishment. To prevent frauds in weight, &c., L. F. SCHREIBVOGEL had been appointed Assayer of Weights and Measures, and every merchant and shopkeeper was ordered to send their weights and measures to him within

\* Probably between the Post Office and Holmes Stelling; the market-place was changed on several occasions.

eight days, when they would have to pay five stivers for each, on pain of a fine of a hundred guilders, a third to the Colony, a third to the Fiscal, and the remainder to the informer.

A Proclamation was issued on the 14th of August of the same year that JAMES BONTEIN had entered into his office of Collector of Customs in conformity with the British Revenue Laws, this innovation being apparently allowed without any objection on the part of the colonists. G. J. LOBBS had been appointed Harbour Master on November 5th previous, and with the notice of this appeared a tariff of his fees. Slaves were allowed to be imported in neutral vessels by proclamation of April 18th, 1796, but by notice of August 18th, not without a special license, on pain of a fine of a thousand guilders.

The new regulations for roads and bridges caused a great deal of trouble. On the 2nd of February 1797, on the petition of the inhabitants of the Demerara River, it was permitted that the roads and bridges from the Brickery to Soesdyk, and Georgia to Vriesland, be eight feet wide, on account of the little traffic in this district. At the same time it was stated that in consequence of the new law it would be necessary to remove the road passing through Stabroek, as well as the bridges on both sides of the town. A committee was appointed to fix on the best place for the new road, so that it could be connected with those of Werk-en-Rust and Vlissingen, which reported on the 23rd of the same month. The new road was to be carried from that of Vlissingen through the lot belonging to the Government, on which an old brick foundation was standing, and then across the middle path of Stabroek to the concession also belonging to Government, and occupied by an old decayed carpenter's logie, where it would meet the road of Werk-en-Rust.\* It was found impossible to con-

\* The new road is now Main Street.

tract for the work, but a carpenter was inclined to undertake it if provided with sixteen Government negroes. As there was a difficulty in procuring negroes the Governor ultimately had to hire plantation slaves from Mr. KROLL, at a cost of £2.15 per day for each, the expense of the work being paid in equal portions from the Colony Chest and the Town Fund.

On the 24th of February the Governor informed the Court that Service in the public church at Stabroek, which had not been held for a long time on account of the late Minister's departure for Holland, was now resumed by a British Clergyman named McMAHON. "Although this gentleman did not belong to the Presbyterian Church, which had always been the prevailing Church of these colonies, but to the Episcopal Church, which prevails in England, he nevertheless performed Service regularly every Sunday, to the great edification and satisfaction of the public." It appeared therefore to the Governor that it was in every way reasonable and just that the salary allotted by the Government and Colony to the Predicant, should be provisionally allowed to the Revd. F. McMAHON, this amounting to £2,400 per annum and house rent. It was resolved by majority that in their opinion "it is every way just and reasonable that the same fixed and permanent advantages possessed by former parsons should also be enjoyed by Mr. MAHON, as long as no other is appointed, and he continues to perform Divine Service in this Colony, and therefore, the same allowance as the Records show was paid to former parsons shall be paid him." In May following £200 was granted him for a quarter's house rent, this being payable from the Colony Chest, while the regular salary was divided equally between the two funds.

From the following letter of Colonel HYSLOP, dated October 29th 1798, to the Court of Policy, it may be seen that great

efforts were made to put Fort WILLIAM FREDERICK in a position for defence:—

“I feel perfectly convinced of the Court’s readiness at all times to concur in any measure which is properly suggested to it, for ordering the necessary assistance of labour requisite for keeping in order the public works and defences of the colony, and I can have no doubt that had the same spirit been prevalent among the planters in general, (which has been by no means the case, as it scarcely ever happened that the number of negroes furnished has amounted to that required, and in many instances the very refuse have been sent) the works would not at this moment have been in the perilous state to which the late spring tides have brought them to.

“The Honourable Court observes that the number of negroes ordered during a long period is far superior to what was ever demanded before. If this period includes the whole time since the colony has been in the possession of His Majesty’s forces, I can very readily conceive it, because it was but too visible, that prior to that event, no labour whatever had been bestowed on the works, which were then in consequence in a totally defenceless state. Not a platform was laid or a gun mounted that was serviceable. Considerable expense has since been incurred in constructing entire new batteries, and replacing the old guns and carriages with new and serviceable ones, as well as in erecting a new powder magazine and barracks, all within the fort. It has also required incessant labour to keep back the force and encroachment of the sea. I am confident that had not the most indefatigable pains been bestowed by the Engineers, with the timely assistance they have frequently got from the Corps of Rangers, the whole fort and buildings must long since have been carried away. Its present state is such, that it has been necessary to send a particular report to the Commander-in-Chief; in the meantime, when the negroes are furnished, which the Honourable Court intend to order, every endeavour will be made to secure it.”

From the above it appears that the fort was in a ruinous state when the colony came into the possession of the British, and that it owed any little strength that it ever had to the domination of foreign powers. The planters strongly objected to the requisitions of negroes for public works, and as the Government did nothing more than put the chain gang to labour on them, they necessarily became dilapidated.



The public road and middle walk of Stabroek, being now in order, it was found necessary to attend to the drainage, the North and South Canals having become almost choked. From a Publication dated October 31st 1799 it appears that there was some difficulty in getting contractors to dig the canals, they wanting the enormous price of f27,000, (£2,250) on account of the danger to the negroes from their being full of broken glass and earthenware, which, together with the filth of every kind that had been accumulating for a long time, rendered the digging very arduous. It was considered of the greatest importance however that these canals should be deepened and put in better order. An extraordinary town tax had already been imposed in January previous and it was now ordered that a second should be levied in the same month next year. On lots 1 to 30 inclusive was imposed a tax of f150 each in one payment, 31 to 63 and those under the letter E f100, and all others f50. This was to be quite independent of the Concession Tax which was to be paid annually as usual. As the amount thus raised would not cover the whole expense, the Governor recommended all interested in the navigation of the canals to contribute towards the deficiency so that the improvement might not be delayed; those willing to do so being invited to give in their names to the Committee of the Court, the Fiscal and F. KROL, Esq. By a Publication of March 5th previous, Pln. *Werk-en-Rust* had been adjoined to Stabroek, this being the first addition to the municipal boundaries. On account of the provisions of JOSEPH BOURDA'S will, which did not admit of the alienation of *Vlissingen* until the death of his children, he not appearing to have sold any portion up to his death, which occurred in 1798, Newtown could not be incorporated for a long time afterwards, although it virtually became an addition to Stabroek and the business centre before *Werk-en-Rust*.

From the Royal Essequibo and Demerary Gazette\*—which, although nothing but an advertising sheet, little larger than foolscap, is very interesting—the development of the town and colony can be traced. Consequent on the new roads, carriages began to be imported, as may be seen from an advertiser in 1799, having “an elegant new Grand Pianoforte; also a good second-hand chariot,” for sale. Many of the planters had good libraries—in fact private collections of books were more common than at present. In 1800, PETER BORDES FLETCHER offered a large collection of books and prints for sale, at the store of WILSON and CLARKE, *Labourgade*, including among others HOGARTH, RAPIN’S History, JOHNSON’S Dictionary and Poets, the ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA and a set of the Annual Register. As he could not sell them privately they were afterwards put up as prizes in a lottery, the total value of the whole collection being  $\text{f}9,900$  £875. The following advertisement shows that the Circulating Library was not wanting, and is also an example of the miscellaneous contents of a store :—

“Stabroek Circulating Library, Cumingsburg, next house to Messrs. SMITH & BELL. The Stabroek Circulating Library, consisting of 15,000 volumes, kept by GRAHAM & ROSS.

Is open for Subscribers at Four Joes per annum, one half paid down, the other in six months.

The Stabroek Library will in a short time be supplied with a choice collection of German and Dutch books.

At GRAHAM & ROSS’S store there are for sale books on various subjects; most of which are bound in Russia, a certain antidote to vermin; among them are the British Parliamentary Debates 64 volumes, MORSE’S Geography, HOWARD’S Encyclopedia, WHITE’S Account of New South Wales, LAVATER’S Physiognomy, PARK’S Travels into Africa, DAMBERGER ditto, Naval Vocabulary, Books of Science, Travels, Voyages, Dictionaries and School-books, Setts of Account Books for merchants, ruled and bound in Russia, writing paper, ink powder, pens, wax and wafers. Where also may be had excellent bottled porter, tea

\* The first file in existence, as far as can be gleaned, is that in the Registrar’s Office, commencing with No. 168, Vol. iv., Decr. 14th, 1799.

and loaf sugar, trips in kegs, white wine vinegar, pickles of various kinds, fish and meat sauces, ready-made waistcoats, boots and shoes, the best London cut tobacco with pipes, Scotch snuff, and warranted old London particular Madeira Wines in pipes."

Demerary, Sept. 12th, 1801.

Mr. FLETCHER advertised in September 1801, that a Portrait Painter of considerable ability was then in Barbados, and if provided with encouragement would come over. His terms were five to fifty Joes, and the advertiser would be glad to receive the names of subscribers. About three months afterwards Mr. WEAVER the Portrait Painter arrived in the colony, so it may be presumed that he obtained more encouragement than would be the case now-a-days.

The planters were very liberal at this time and money seems to have been easily obtained, although salaries were then about the same in guilders as they are now in dollars. In July 1800 Colonel HYSLOP gave notice that he had remitted the sum of £364.10 which had been collected for the widows, wives and children of soldiers, sailors and marines, killed or wounded in the expedition to Holland under the Duke of York.

Lotteries were not uncommon, being allowed on application to the Court of Policy, and paying the same Church and Poor money as auction sales. In April 1800 the half lot No. 37, Stabroek was offered as a prize, it being valued at f21,000, (£1,750) while the tickets were priced at f434 (£36.6.8) each. The winner was bound to pay a thousand guilders each to the drawers of the first and last blanks. Among other lotteries there was one of a lot of land and a house in Barbados, which, with other circumstances, goes to show the intimate connection between this colony and "Little England."

Whether a school existed in the colony before this time is uncertain, but as there was an allowance granted for a sexton and schoolmaster about ten years before, it is probable that some institution of the kind had been established.

The first notice of a private school in the Gazette is that of ELIZABETH GODDARD, who advertised that she had taken a house in Stabroek and would be ready on Monday the 13th of January 1800 "for the reception of young Ladies and Gentlemen as boarders."

In March 1802 arrived what we may presume to have been the first "Show," viz., Bishop and Dawson's Wax Works. Among the effigies were those of GEORGE WASHINGTON, JOHN ADAMS, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, Mrs. SIDDONS as the "Grecian Daughter," the Beauty of New York, the Beauty of Philadelphia, a group entitled Maternal Affection, and a few others. The exhibition was open from nine to nine, the price of admission being three dollars, children half-price, while coloured people were only admitted on Fridays and Saturdays.

Among the advertisements is the following, dated Decr. 14th 1799, which not only shows a way of combining two notices in one, but also that Indians were still kept as slaves :—

FOR SALE :

In Cuming Burgh Town on Reasonable terms, Selver Bally and Crab Wood square Timber. Apply to the Subscriber

H. MUTZ

Who have an Indian Boy absconded from him some months past named PORTO a Taylor by Trade, the subscriber has been informed that the said boy is harboured in Mahayka, he therefore give notice, that whoever he is found with, the Laws shall be Enforced against them.

Demerary, Decr. 14th.

It will be noticed that the name of Cumingsburg, had been already applied to the assemblage of houses and stores in front of Pln. *Labourgade*, which then belonged to Mr. CUMING. The Military hospital which had been established by the British in the coffee logie of that plantation became the nucleus of a little suburb which grew up slowly, from what is now Church Street to Murray Street, but was not considered as belonging to Stabroek for some years, although Smith and Bell advertised their *Stabroek Library* as being

in Cumingsburgh in 1801. The connecting link between New Town and Cumingsburgh went first by the name of Albinus Suburbs, and was commenced by the leasing of lots of land belonging to Vlissingen to the lower classes of creoles and Barbadians, as well as free coloured people who carried on the trade of huxters. This was also commenced immediately after the arrival of the British, so that Werk-en-Rust, New Town, Albinus Suburbs, (afterwards Bridgetown and now Robb's Town) Cumingsburg, and Kingston, all owed their existence to the conquest.

The danger to commerce from the war is shown by the shipping notices in the Gazette. One of them presents the thanks of the merchants to Captain WHITE of the Courtland for protection of and attention to the ships and vessels bound to this colony from England in the last fleet, from the time they parted with the convoy until their arrival in port. The shipping notices appear very warlike, for example:—

“For London. The Fast Sailing Ship, *Prince of Wales*; mounts 16 guns. Will sail in Company with two armed vessels.”

Ten ship captains met together in December 1799 and agreed to raise their freight charges to 3d. per lb. for cotton, and 10 shillings per cwt. for sugar and coffee, with primage five of per cent, but as the shippers would not agree to these rates they were reduced the following week.

With the increase of trade and the opening of stores it naturally followed that more small coin was found necessary. Up to the present there had been some difficulty in procuring sufficient change, but this had not been felt so much on account of there being so few petty traders. Now however began a series of attempts to regulate this matter, which were continued down to the time when Banks were established.

Accounts were kept in guilders, (40 cents) and stivers, (2 cents) but there does not appear to have been any of the

latter coins in circulation, or very many of the former. The bit, or quarter guilder, appears to have been substituted by the Danish schelling, which varied in exchange value at different times from ten to fourteen cents. Then came the Spanish dollar, nominally put down as worth two and a half, but often passing for nearly or quite three guilders. Finally, there was the Portuguese Joé or Johannes, a gold coin, valued at twenty-two guilders.

The Court declared in a Publication dated February 16th, 1801, that the scarcity of silver coins pressed on all classes of the inhabitants, giving rise to great abuses, persons refusing to change gold except at a great discount. It was now ordered that in future the Danish schelling should be reduced in value, the Spanish dollar, which then passed by eleven schellings or bits, to be in future taken for twelve, a penalty of *f*150 being imposed on either party concerned in changing gold for less than its legal value.

As soon as the British rule was established a tide of immigration set in, many planters from the West Indies coming to Demerara and Berbice with all their slaves and effects. This naturally raised the price of estates, and soon began to tell upon the exports. Besides the slaves brought in this way, the importations from Africa to these colonies amounted to over five thousand per annum during the seven years following 1796. In 1798, a hundred and sixty slave vessels from London, Liverpool and Bristol, took 57,104 negroes from Africa to the West Indies. These cost about £15 to £16 each, and sold in Demerara and the West Indies at prices ranging from £50 to £80. The loss on the voyage was calculated at five per cent. ; it may be easily seen therefore that the profits were considerable.

The imports into Great Britain from the three rivers, in

the year 1801 were three times as great as in 1799, as may be seen from the following table\* :—

	cwts.	qrs.	lbs.		glns.
1799 Sugar,	35,189	1	20.	Rum,	14,456.
1800 „	51,199	1	22.	„	93,070.
1801 „	95,031	1	3.	„	139,781.
	cwts.	qrs.	lbs.		lbs.
1799 Coffee,	39,089	2	6.	Cotton,	3,593,053.
1800 „	114,692	3	21.	„	7,057,665.
1801 „	142,819	1	14.	„	7,622,942.

It will be at once noticed that there was a general increase in all the products, not as at a later period, of one at the expense of the others. High prices ruled in the last years of the century, which naturally led to increased cultivation. Sugar sold in 1797 at 63s., in 1798 at 65s., and in 1799 at 55s., after which there was a downward tendency, which made the planters cry out terribly. Being war time the shipping expenses were considerable, amounting to about twenty three shillings per cwt. insurance alone reaching to from ten to twenty per cent while freight was about nine shillings per cwt. Yet with all these drawbacks the profits of a sugar plantation were very satisfactory. It was calculated that an estate with two hundred slaves would produce about as many hogsheads of sugar of 13 cwt. each. After paying all the shipping expenses and commission, as well as for the regular supplies, the net profit to the planter would be £12 to £13 per hhd. For such an estate the annual supplies cost about £1000, and consisted of herrings at £2.5 per brl., salt 3s. 6d. per bushel, salt beef £7 per brl, salt pork £7.10 per brl, blue baize 3s. per yd., osnaburgs 10d. per yd., cotton checks 1s. 6d. per yd., felt hats 1s. 6d. each, and a few other necessaries such as staves and hoops. The herrings and salt were almost the only articles of food supplied to the slaves, as they raised sufficient vegetables for their own maintenance, while for clothing, the men were

\* Annual Register, 1802.

supplied with baize for a loose blouse, and osnaburg for trousers, and the women with cotton check for their petticoats and loose chemise. Rum was calculated as half a puncheon to a hogshead of sugar, so that the estate under consideration would produce a hundred puncheons, realising after all expenses were paid £8 or £10 each. It would therefore follow that a planter with about £20,000 invested in an estate and two hundred negroes, would derive from it a net income of something like £3,500 per annum, besides which, his household expenses would be a mere trifle, as most of his necessaries were grown on the estate or came out of the plantation supplies. Even if he had mortgaged the estate for its full value at ten per cent, he would still have an income of £1,500 a year. With coffee at 120 shillings a hundred weight and cotton at 1s. 10d. a pound, the plantations under these cultivations were not far behind those of sugar.

Cotton plantations generally produced about three hundred pounds per acre, which returned to the owner of an estate of two hundred acres, after paying all expenses, something like £2000 per annum. Coffee was cropped two or three times a year, every tree giving one to one and a half pounds at each picking, or four to six hundred-weights per acre in the course of the year. Taking the same two hundred acres, and reckoning all the expenses as before the profit would average £2,500 to £3,000. Both of these products could be grown with less labour and expense than sugar, half the number of slaves being sufficient, while the work was less arduous and far more healthy. To obviate the difficulty of procuring labour in crop time, planters often lent their slaves to each other in emergencies, expecting in return the same accommodation when it was necessary.

The respective values of the produce from the three cultivations in 1801, may be roughly estimated as, sugar



and rum £262,039, coffee £856,914, and cotton £670,818, total £1,789,771.

While giving all due credit to the Dutch as founders of Essequibo and Demerara, it will be seen from the foregoing that the development of the colony was, in a far greater measure than is usually thought, due to British energy. On account of the necessary adoption of the Dutch system of dams and canals, it has been generally supposed that the credit of its success must be given to the planters of that nationality, but such is not altogether the case. As we have seen, there were already a large number of English planters in Demerara before the capitulation, while after that the arrivals were frequent and the original possessors fell into the background.

It is not to be supposed that the English planter of those days could play the fine gentleman. On the contrary, his work was very arduous, he having to reclaim from the sea and morass the thousands of acres of alluvial soil which now form the coast plantations. Although most of these had been granted fifteen or twenty years before, the area in cultivation was generally small and sometimes of trifling importance. Now came the capitalist, who bought the plantation and commenced to clear and empolder a much larger acreage than his predecessor. That there should have been a great deal of sickness and death among both whites and slaves in the course of this work, was naturally to be expected. Unlike the plodding Dutchman, whose motto might be "*festina lente*," the English planter drove his overseers, these pricked up the drivers, who in their turn hurried on the slaves, until things became very lively for those who could stand the strain. While prices were high and fortunes in prospective, a few losses were considered of little consequence, and taken as necessary contingencies. The planter or his manager ran risks against which his constitution was less protected than that of the

poor negro, while the overseer appears to have been worse off than even the slave. For a paltry sum of six hundred guilders per annum (\$240) he had to endure the scorching sun or deluge, while very often standing up to his middle in black reeking mud the very smell of which meant intermittent fever. It can hardly be conceived at the present day what difficulties were encountered by these overseers, for which unfortunately (as happens even now with the same class of men) no one thought of giving them credit. Writing to a newspaper in 1834, an old manager said that when he arrived in the colony in 1801, the overseer had not only to teach the negroes how to work but how to talk as well. What with the heavy rains and undrained swamps, not one in ten survived after ten years, while of nineteen overseers who arrived with him he alone remained, the last of the others having died eight years before. With all this there was a recklessness on the part of the overseer in regard to the care of his own health, which it would never have done to import into the management of the master's human property. A dead manager or overseer meant a vacancy, and the more deaths the greater chance of promotion. It need not be implied that these young Scotchmen and Barbadians were looking out for such things, but the fact remained that the overseer had then far more chances of promotion than at a later period.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### *CESSION TO DUTCH AND RECAPTURE, 1802—1804.*

Peace of Amiens—Dutch colonies to be restored—Testimonial to Colonel Hyslop—Arrival of Dutch Governor—Unpopularity of new administration—Preparations for defence—War declared—Operations in the West Indies—Expedition to capture Demerara—Terms offered and accepted—Articles of Capitulation—Meeting of the Court of Policy—Address of Lieutenant-General Grinfield—Lieutenant-Colonel Nicholson appointed Governor—Custom-House proposed and objected to—Nicholson's Commission—His address—Militia regulations—Dams of Cumingsburg in bad condition—Slaves and coloured persons—Proclamations.

**B**ONAPARTE, then First Consul of the French Republic, seems to have wanted a little breathing time in the year 1801; probably he wished to get hold of the French and Dutch colonies so as to dispute Britain's position as ruler of the seas. Accordingly, preliminary articles of peace were agreed to on the 1st of October of that year and on the 25th of March following the treaty of Amiens was signed. By the third article His Britannic Majesty agreed to restore to the French Republic and its allies, viz., His Catholic Majesty and the Batavian Republic, all the possessions and colonies which had belonged to them and had been either occupied or conquered during the war, except the island of Trinidad and the Dutch possessions in Ceylon. In another article the boundaries between Portuguese and French Guiana were defined, the colony of Cayenne extending aback of Surinam, Berbice and Demerara, to the Essequibo and including a portion of what is now considered as belonging to British Guiana. The conquered territories in America were to be evacuated by the British within three months, but the English inhabitants were to be

allowed three years to dispose of their possessions, during which time they were not to be molested, or in any way disturbed in person or property on account of political conduct, opinion, or attachment to either party.

This was a serious blow to the three rivers. The old Dutch settlers had very little sympathy with the Batavian Republic, while the British planters looked on the French ideas with horror. Thousands of pounds had been spent in putting their plantations in order, and now that they were becoming profitable, it was very hard to be forced to dispose of them at a great sacrifice. In April 1802 the Secretary of State wrote to Colonel HYSLOP informing him that the King intended to grant land in Trinidad on very favourable terms to such British subjects as might be inclined to remove to that island with their negroes from the colonies which were shortly to be restored to the Batavian Republic, at the same time asking the Colonel to make this intention generally known in Demerara. This was all very well for those who had little to lose, but to an estate's proprietor it meant beginning life again as it were, and the loss of the fruit of his labours.

In anticipation of the evacuation of the colony a sabre, worth 500 guineas was presented to Colonel HYSLOP by the Court of Policy in October 1802, together with an address, to which he replied as follows:—

“ Impressed with the liveliest sense of gratitude for the distinguished and most honourable testimony of approbation which you have been pleased to confer on me, by a resolve passed during your last session, I fain would express myself in words somewhat suitable to the occasion and calculated if possible to carry some idea of the keenness of those feelings, which the communication of it (couched in terms so forcible and highly flattering) could not fail to excite.

“ Conscious however of my utter inability to find language in any manner descriptive thereof, I must entreat you gentlemen to pardon the simplicity, while you render justice for the sincerity with which I now beg leave to offer you this humble tribute of most grateful acknowledgements.

“The reward arising from such a public testimony of approbation as that which you have judged proper to bestow, far exceeds any merit to which I can presume to lay claim, but if (while under Divine Providence, to the wise measures and liberal principles adopted by His Majesty’s Government in the administration of this colony are chiefly to be attributed the great blessings it has therefrom derived) any security to the tranquility, happiness and prosperity of it is allowed to be ascribed to the general good order and discipline of the troops, I beg it may be imputed to the undeviating zeal and assistance which I, on all occasions, experienced from the unwearied exertions of the Officers I have had the honour to command. The Officers unite in expressing their acknowledgements, and with one voice entreat the Almighty to continue to this colony and its inhabitants the uninterrupted enjoyment of the many blessings it has so singularly hitherto enjoyed. Fully penetrated with a just sense of the additional instance of your particular consideration towards me by the handsome present you have ordered to be prepared, &c.”

On the 2nd of December HYSLOP was also granted two years arrears of table money, for which he applied on the ground that he had been in the colony for that period before he had received the allowance of £800 per annum, beyond his pay. On the same day arrived the new Governor, ANTONY MEERTENS, to take over the colony on behalf of the Batavian Republic, which was done on the 3rd and proclaimed on the 20th of the same month with the order, customary under such circumstances, that those who intended to remain should take the oath of allegiance.

It will be remembered that ANTONY MEERTENS was Fiscal of Demerara when the planters had their great struggle with the West India Company. Having taken the unpopular side at that time, he was naturally disliked by the constitutional party, and especially the English, he in his turn openly declaring his hatred of the latter. After resigning the office of Fiscal he practised as an attorney-at-law, by which he saved enough money to buy Pln. *Rome*, which cost him £30,000. Here he built a fine mansion which afterwards became Government House, and took himself a creole young lady to wife, she being, like many members

of the best families in the colony, of Indian extraction. He was a Councillor of Policy in 1796, but left in 1799 and went to London, where he lived until the peace, when he went over to Holland and obtained the appointment of Governor of Essequibo and Demerara.

With the Governor arrived a new official, Mr. LAMAISSON, Vice-President of the Courts, who was to act, in the absence of the Governor, as President of the Court of Justice.

On the 1st of December fifteen hundred soldiers arrived, but as no preparations had been made for them, suitable accommodation could not be found. They had been badly fed on the voyage, and naturally wanted good meals and comfortable lodgings on their arrival, but instead of these no rations were issued on that day, while next morning they were turned out without breakfast to form a guard of honour to the new Governor. As might have been anticipated sickness followed, and within three months five hundred died.

The administration of MEEBENS was naturally unpopular with the English, but when he virtually ordered them to dispose of their plantations and leave the colony, he was simply detested. Then came a prohibition against shipping produce to British possessions, against which the planters petitioned the Batavian Republic, but without success. To add to the trouble, the Militia were called upon to perform Military duties on account of the sickness of the soldiers. For a short time the British inhabitants were in a most despondent state, considering themselves ruined, some plantations being disposed of at merely nominal prices. From this state they were raised by the news, which arrived in April, 1803, that war was again breaking out. They now began to hope that something would happen to get them out of their difficulties. As might naturally be expected the news of the impending war did not tend to

promote more cordiality between the Batavian authorities and the English, and it is said that the latter sent a deputation to Barbados inviting the authorities to again take possession of the colony.

The Court of Policy was now very busy, a number of new Ordinances being passed, the general effect of which was to undo the work of the previous six years. Some improvements were projected which could not then be carried out, but were left over and accomplished later. On the 17th of May, in compliance with a petition of the inhabitants of Stabroek, it was resolved to cut down the forest behind the town, and to light the street at night, while regulations were made for strays, against furious riding, and to establish a new market in Cumingsburg. Next day permission was granted to erect an Anglican Church, while a petition of the Commissaries of Cumingsburg to be incorporated with Stabroek, was "not entertained for the present." There was an insurrection of slaves on *Plns. Hague* and *Cornelia Ida* in June which was soon put down. This followed upon some stringent regulations for the slaves,—but whether consequent on these does not appear—passed a month before. No slave was to walk out at night after 8 o'clock without a lantern and a pass, or to carry any weapon or bludgeon at any time without a permit from his master, stating for what purpose it was allowed. By other regulations of the same period no tavern keeper could sell to slaves on pain of forfeiting his license, and no licensed dealer or other person was to sell gunpowder to slaves on any pretence. Planters were also forbidden to allow slaves to dance more than four times a year, exclusive of the fixed holidays, and then never later than midnight. It appears from these that the Dutch thought the English too easy and careless in slave management, while on the other side we know that the latter always spoke of the Dutchman as a cruel master.

Preparations were made to defend the colony against an expected invasion, a thousand guilders being granted by the Court to Lieutenant of Artillery HOFFMANN, for his zeal and activity in superintending the fortifications at Fort WILLIAM FREDERICK, but what with the weakness of the soldiers and the difficulties in the way of defending a long coast line, very little could be done. It therefore followed that when on the 13th of September, 1803, the Governor reported that a formidable fleet, supposed to be English, was approaching, he was obliged also to state that the batteries were unable to defend the river, the Fort useless, and that he thought it would be wise to obtain a honourable capitulation if possible.

The Peace of Amiens was not satisfactory, to either of the contracting parties, being in fact nothing more than a truce. In March, 1803, the King acquainted the House of Commons that great military preparations were being made in France and Holland, and he had therefore judged it expedient to adopt additional measures of precaution. Some disputes had arisen because the British refused to evacuate Malta in accordance with the terms of the peace, and on the 16th of May it was announced that the negotiations had been broken off and that the Ambassadors of both nations had been recalled, this being followed two days afterwards by a declaration of war on the part of Great Britain. On the 17th of June, Parliament was informed that the King had offered to respect the neutrality of Holland if BONAPARTE would do the same, but as this had not been accepted, he had been compelled, with regret, to issue Letters of Marque against the Dutch.

Before the news of the declaration of war could have been known in the West Indies, Commodore HOOD and General GRINFIELD, then in command of the sea and land forces in this part of the world, set to work to capture the colonies so lately given up by the British. On the 21st



of June they captured St. Lucia, on the 30th took Tobago, and returning to Barbados fitted out an expedition for Demerara, which sailed on the 1st of September, but owing to light winds did not arrive off the coast until the evening of the 17th. It consisted of *H.M. Ships Centaur, Chichester, and Alligator*, the *Hornet, Heureux, Netley*, and *Brilliant* transports, with several smaller vessels.

Being off the east coast the *Netley* was sent as near shore as possible with Mr. CASEY, who, well acquainted with the people, landed for the purpose of procuring a number of colony boats, in which he succeeded so far as to obtain twenty-four. The *Hornet* was then sent forward to blockade the mouth of the river, while the other vessels of the squadron anchored, and the Commanders of the expedition despatched a flag of truce with a demand for the surrender of Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice. Being fully assured of their decided superiority to the forces of the Batavian Republic, and certain of their ability to prevent succours being thrown in, they required the immediate surrender of the colonies. To prevent unnecessary effusion of blood, or the mischief which must ensue should the troops be under the necessity of making good the landing, and the ships have to enforce a passage, they trusted that from His Excellency's regard for the colonies and certainty of being unable to resist, he would have no hesitation in acceding to the proposed terms; the officers being ordered to wait one hour for his answer. The articles proposed were as follows :—

1. The colonies of Demerary, Essequibo, and Berbice, with their dependencies, to be surrendered within twenty-four hours to the arms and protection of the British Government.
2. The fort of William Frederick is to be taken possession of at — by the troops of the British Government.
3. The garrison in these colonies are to be and to remain prisoners of war until released or exchanged, and to deliver their arms, accoutrements and ammunition to the person appointed to receive them. They will be allowed all the usual honours of war; the officers to retain and

wear their swords, and to have their paroles ; and the officers and men their clothing and baggage.

4. The public stores, storehouses, land and revenues, ships and vessels, belonging to the Batavian Republic, are to surrender to the British Government.

5. The private property, as well on shore as afloat, of all persons who were *bona fide* proprietors at the time the said possessions were restored by His Majesty to the Batavian Republic, will be respected, and not be considered as liable to seizure.

6. The civil laws of these colonies, as far as regards the property and civil jurisdiction, to remain as they now are until the further pleasure of the King shall be known.

7. The Council and Civil magistrates of the colony, taking the oaths of allegiance to the British Government, to remain as they now are, with the exception of such of either as, by their known attachment to the Batavian Republic, would endanger the colonies by their remaining in places of trust and confidence.

8. The Government and defence of the colonies belong to the British nation.

In reply to this demand Governor MEERTENS stated that he had convened the Court of Policy and the commanding officers of the sea and land forces, who had framed some terms of capitulation with which they had deputed a Committee to wait on their Excellencies, this Committee being fully authorised to conclude the capitulation as far as Demerara and Essequibo were concerned, but not for Berbice as its government was quite distinct. The deputation having gone on board the *Heureux*, the following terms were proposed and agreed to and formally published on the 19th September, 1803 :—

1. The Laws and Usages of the Colony shall remain in Force and be respected, the mode of Taxation now in use be adhered to, and the Inhabitants shall enjoy the public exercise of their Religion in the same manner as before the Capitulation : No new establishments shall be introduced without the consent of the Court of Police and the Legislature of the Colony. The constituted Authorities and Public Officers, whether in the Civil, Law or Church establishments, as well as the members of the respective Courts (except the Governor General) shall be continued in their respective Offices and Situations, until His Majesty's pleasure shall be known. Answer : Granted.

2. The Inhabitants, those who at present are in the Colony, as well

as those who may be abroad, shall be Protected in their Persons, and have the free enjoyment of their Properties, without being troubled or molested for any acts whatsoever ; other than such as they might commit subsequent to the Capitulation and in violation of the Oath of Fidelity they shall be required to take. Answer : Granted.

3. The Inhabitants shall on no account whatever be obliged to take up Arms against the external Enemy, but their services shall only be required for quelling internal commotions or disturbances, according to the regulations of the Burghers, and for maintaining the internal tranquility of the Colony, in conformity to what has always taken place to this day. Answer : Granted, until at the conclusion of the war, it shall be determined to what Government these Colonies shall be subjected.

4. The Debts contracted by the Government for the Building of new Barracks, the erection of Batteries, the purchase of Provisions for the Garrison, the Salaries of Civil Officers due, shall, on the first demand be paid out of the Sovereign's or Government Chest, as well as other demands that would have been paid or reimbursed by Government had the Colony not been taken. Answer : Granted.

5. The Sea and Land Forces of the Batavian Republic, stationed in the Colony, shall be allowed to depart freely. They shall retain their Arms and the whole of their Baggage, as well the Officers, non-Commissioned Officers, as Privates. They shall be supplied by the Commandant of His Majesty's Forces with proper Vessels to convey them with the most convenient speed to one of the ports of the Batavian Republic, and during the passage thither, they shall receive for account of His Majesty, each according to his rank, the same rations both as to quantity and quality as are usually allowed to British Troops. Answer : Granted, but the Troops and Seamen must be considered as Prisoners of War, and not to bear Arms against Great Britain or her Allies until regularly exchanged or released ; and the Arms and Accoutrements of the Soldiers must be given up.

6. The *Corvette Hippomanes* shall be given up unarmed, for transporting her Officers and Crew to one of the Ports of the Batavian Republic ; as many Troops of the Batavian Garrison shall embark and take their passage in the said *Corvette*, as can be conveniently placed on board of her. Answer : Cannot be granted, proper Vessels will be furnished at the expense of the British Government, to carry the Troops and Seamen to Europe.

7. The Governor General, not having Military Rank, shall be at liberty to remain in the Colony, un'til he shall have collected the necessary Documents or Proofs towards enabling him to lay before his

Sovereign an account of his Administration, after which every facility shall be afforded him to return to the Batavian Republic in a manner suitable to his Rank. He shall be allowed to require such Copies of Papers from the Government and Colonial Secretary's Offices as he may deem necessary for the purpose above expressed. Answer : Granted.

8. From the day of the Colony being taken possession of by the British Forces, the Batavian Troops shall be supplied with their usual rations by the British Commanders, until the day of their embarkation, and from that moment the Batavian Troops are to receive the same rations as are usually allowed to British Troops when at sea, in the manner mentioned in the 5th Article. Answer : Granted.

9. The Batavian Troops shall continue to all intents and purposes under the Command of their own Officers ; every respect and honour shall be mutually shown by the Troops of both Nations to one another, and care shall be taken on both sides to preserve peace and tranquility until the departure of the Batavian Troops. Answer : Proper Quarters will be allowed for the Batavian Troops, to which they must confine themselves until their embarkation.

10. The Batavian Garrison shall be allowed freely and without any hindrance, to take along with it all Accoutrements and Arms belonging to it also the effects (effects) of deceased Officers, non-Commissioned Officers and Privates, that may yet be unsold, whether the same be deposited in the Public Magazines or in any other place. Answer : That part of the Article relating to the Arms and Accoutrements is answered in Article 5—the remainder is granted.

11. The Sick of the Batavian Troops who may be left behind in the Hospital, shall be treated and taken care of in the same manner with the British Soldiers ; they shall be entitled to the same terms of Capitulation, and enjoy the same advantages as are stipulated for the rest of the Batavian Garrison, and in like manner as the latter, they shall, after their complete recovery, be transported with the most speed convenient to one of the Ports of the Batavian Republic. Answer : Granted.

12. The Commanders of His Majesty's Forces shall immediately on the Colony being taken possession of, furnish the Governor General with a conveyance to transmit to the Batavian Government, a Copy of the Capitulation, with a statement of the reasons that induced him, as well as the Council of Police, and the Commanding Officers of the Batavian Forces, to surrender the Colony to His Britannic Majesty. Answer : Granted, the Vessel which takes Our Dispatches to Europe will take those of the Governor of the Colonies.

13. No Negroes shall be required from the Planters for the purpose of forming or recruiting any Black Corps. Answer : Granted.

14. Should any Difficulties arise in consequence of any dubious expressions occurring in the present Capitulation, the same shall be explained or construed in the sense most favourable to the Colony or the Batavian Garrison. Answer : Granted.

On the side of the British Commanders the following additional Articles were demanded :—

1. Possession of Fort William Frederick is to be given to a Detachment of British Troops this evening by seven o'clock ; also that of the Batavian Ship of War *Hippomanes*, by the British Seamen, and the *Hornet* British Sloop of War, and the Schooner *Nelley* are to be allowed to pass into the Harbour of Demerary. Answer : Acceeded to.

2. Possession of the Colonies of Demerary and Essequibo to be given to the British by twelve o'clock tomorrow noon. Answer : Acceeded to.

Thus the two rivers came again into the hands of the British, from whom they should never have been allowed to depart, the troops landing from His Majesty's ships in colony boats, which had been cheerfully supplied by some of the English planters. Had there been any bells in Stabroek, they would have probably rung for joy on this occasion, but such being wanting, the people had to be satisfied with firing guns and pistols, and making as much as possible of the Officers and soldiers.

The first meeting of the Court of Policy after the capitulation was held on the 22nd of September, when Lieutenant-General GRINFIELD took his seat as President. The other Councillors were G. H. TROTZ the Commandeur of Essequibo, L. P. LUYKEN, C. D. MACK, F. VAN DEN VELDEN, and F. KROLL, those absent being Governor MEEBENS and Fiscal G. S. GUICHERIT of Essequibo who sent in his resignation. After taking the oath of allegiance and ordering a Publication calling on the inhabitants to do the same, they proceeded to business. Mr. F. P. VAN BERCKEL was then appointed Fiscal of Demerara, he having filled the same office during the former occupation of the British, his salary being fixed at  $\text{f}6,000$  per annum from the Government Chest and an allowance for house rent from the Colony

Chest. The Court informed the new Fiscal, in reply to a question, that he would be permitted to carry on private practice before the Court of Justice, as long as it did not interfere with his functions as Fiscal, on which he took the oath and his seat. The President then addressed the Court as follows :—

“I have the greatest satisfaction in having it in my power to address you, and congratulate you and the Colony of Essequibo and Demerary on their being restored without bloodshed or mischief to the protection of Great Britain. These colonies may be assured that I shall take every means in my power to maintain their laws, protect their property, and prevent their being retaken by the enemy, and I trust that the conduct of the Officers and soldiers, who will be left for the Garrison, will be such as to merit the perfect esteem and confidence of the inhabitants.”

“Lieutenant-Colonel NICHOLSON, who is the Officer I propose to leave in Demerara and Essequibo as the Lieutenant-Governor, will I trust be here shortly—I have little or no doubt but you will find him the soldier and the gentleman, and well calculated for so important a charge.”

On the 28th an extraordinary meeting was called by the General for the purpose of submitting a proposition for a Custom House. This was objected to at first on the ground that the matter had not been mentioned in the notice and therefore they were not prepared to discuss such a momentous question. The President replied that as his stay was short he would like to have a decision at once. On this the Court deliberated, and resolved, that as by the Articles of Capitulation no new establishment could be introduced without consent of the Court, and they were not willing to consent, the matter should be submitted to His Majesty the King for his decision. The President then asked them to state their objections in writing and informed them that he intended to make a Proclamation that four and a half per cent. export duty would be levied, for which he had the orders of the Secretary of State. The Members still protested that this was contrary to the capitulation, and Mr. VINCENT who had just been appointed King's Re-

ceiver, resigned, Mr. C. F. TINNE being appointed in his place.

On the 1st of October the Court said they considered it their duty to oppose this new establishment, and also the four and a half per cent duty, which they thought a direct breach of the capitulation, where it was provided that the mode of taxation should remain as before. It would be a great hardship, as the inhabitants already paid £3·10 on each slave to the Government Chest, besides the duties on produce exported to America.

MEERTENS, having been asked for his opinion, said he could not look on the Custom House as other than an infringement of the articles, both as repugnant to the laws and usages, and an introduction of new taxes. From April, 1796, to August, 1797, vessels were entered and cleared without such an office, none of these being delayed or molested in any way on their arrival in Great Britain. It also appeared from the Account sales before and after the introduction of the Custom House that they were made liable to the extra duty on foreign produce at either time. However strict the navigation laws might be in respect to the permanent dominions of His Majesty, he did not think they were intended to apply with the same rigour to colonies surrendered under capitulations that contained clauses contrary to them.

This matter caused a great deal of excitement in the colony, the republican party declaring that it was a breach of faith, while the merchants, who feared that trouble might arise if they shipped their goods without proper clearances, stood out for the Custom House. At the same time that the Councillors gave in their written protests against the innovation, a petition from thirty-six planters and merchants was read. They had heard of the objections to the proposed Custom House and entertained the most serious apprehensions that if vessels should be sent without

the formalities necessary under the revenue laws of Great Britain, detention and perhaps litigation would ensue before the vessels would be admitted to entry. Knowing that the regular clearances from a Custom House were the only means of preventing such inconveniences, they prayed that the Court would take the matter into their most serious consideration, and, by establishing this, relieve them from the apprehension and uneasiness they were suffering from the reported objections made to its establishment.

After this had been read the Councillors agreed to waive their objections; the inhabitants themselves being desirous of having a Custom House, they were then justified in giving their consent.

This matter having been settled, General GRINFIELD introduced Lieutenant-Colonel NICHOLSON, who laid over the following Commission :—

“ By Lieutenant-General WILLIAM GRINFIELD, Commander of the Forces of His Britannic Majesty in the Leeward and Windward Islands, Trinidad, and the Colonies of Essequibo, Demerary and Berbice, &c.

“ To Lieutenant-Colonel ROBERT NICHOLSON of the 1st battalion of the 1st or Royal Regiment of Foot, or the senior Military Officer for the time being, not under the rank of a field officer, and being born in the United Kingdom, commanding in the Colonies of Essequibo, Demerary and Berbice.

“ By Virtue of the power and authority in me vested, and reposing especial trust and confidence in you, I do hereby nominate and appoint you to be Lieutenant-Governor of the Colonies of Essequibo, Demerary and Berbice, until such time as His Majesty's pleasure shall be signified, and do authorise you to exercise all the powers and authorities granted to Lieutenant Governors by the British laws, taking however especial care, in all matters that concern the civil jurisdiction of these colonies, to conform yourself strictly to the capitulation which has been sanctioned, and Commodore HOOD as Commander-in-Chief, for the aforesaid colonies respectively, and you are to follow such further instructions as you may from time to time receive from His Majesty through the Secretary of State, or from me, for the regulation of all your conduct, as well in your civil as in your Military capacity.

“ Given under my hand and seal at Head Quarters at Stabroek, in the



colony of Demerary, this first day of October, 1803, and in the forty-third year of His Majesty's reign."

Signed: WM. GRINFIELD, Lt.-General.

By Command: WM. TATUM, Mil Sec.

Before leaving the Court, General GRINFIELD tendered his sincere acknowledgements to the members, and expressed his concern for the extraordinary trouble which the recent change had obliged him to require. On the same day the new Lieutenant-Governor was granted *f*24,000 per annum as Table Money.

At the meeting of the Court on the 17th of October, Lieutenant-Governor NICHOLSON thus addressed the members :—

" I have to assure this Honourable Court that my duty and inclination prompt me to unite with both them and the inhabitants in general of these colonies in whatever can tend to their advancement and prosperity.

" To support the Laws and Usages of the colonies entrusted to my government has been and ever will be considered as an indispensable duty.

" To encourage the planting and commercial spirit of them, I must depend much on the judgment and zeal of this Honourable Court, as from your local knowledge of the country and people, you are enabled to give me such information and advice as will ensure my best wishes being happily carried into effect.

" The colonies having before experienced the mild and just government of our most gracious Sovereign, will have confidence in his fatherly solicitude for the welfare and happiness of his people, for which he is so eminently distinguished.

" The Military forces under my command will always be ready to co-operate with the civil power in support of good order and regularity, as well as to repel any attempts of external or internal enemies, who may be envious of the superior advantages enjoyed by the inhabitants of the British Colonies.

" I recommend to this Honourable Court a strict attention to the Police of the Country, and that of the Town in particular, which at present seems to require to be more strongly enforced.

" Permit me again to assure you and the inhabitant sof these colonies that you may rely on my utmost exertions to carry into effect what I have here recommended."

. In the Combined Court on the same day the want of

funds was considered. On account of the Colony Chest being exhausted, twelve thousand guilders had been borrowed from the Government Chest, and it was proposed that an Income Tax be introduced, commencing with *f*40 on incomes ranging from *f*2,000 to *f*3,500. This was objected to as a new establishment, contrary to the laws and usages, but it was ultimately adopted and remained in force for a long time.

The day following it was resolved to levy the head taxes for the years 1796 and 1802, these not having been collected on account of the events of those years. It was incidentally mentioned that even the taxes for 1797, were, in many cases, still owing.

As in 1797, the old question of the Militia being bound to defend the colony against internal enemies only again came to the front. The Governor told the Court that it was obvious to every one that an armed force could not possibly exist in the country except under the command of ~~of~~ men in whom he could repose trust and confidence. The change of sovereignty necessarily rendered at least a partial change of Officers absolutely indispensable. He thought it desirable that the divisions should be united in a more perfect manner, so that all those from the Abary Creek to Soesdyk on the east bank of the Demerara should form one regiment of ten Companies, while the remainder of the colony would form another and be officered as specified by the Commander of the forces. The Commandant, Field Officers, and Captains should be appointed by the Governor and Court, and they should exercise at least once a month at such central places as might be settled upon, while the Major should inspect the battalions once a quarter. These recommendations were partly carried out, but the members would not touch the old privileges and rights to make the Burghers serve against an external enemy. It followed therefore that the expedient of

Volunteers was again introduced, a Publication of October 8th inviting all British subjects to enrol themselves for both *external* and internal defence.

The neglected state of the "dams in front of *La Bourgade*, known as Cumingsburg," was considered on the 18th of October, it being also stated that the bridges were decayed and there was urgent necessity for doing something. It was decided that the Commissaries or Representatives of the proprietors should be required to make up the dams and repair the bridges, to prevent an inundation. On the 1st of November the dams were reported as being still in a very bad state, the land having again been under water during the last spring tide, and the Commissaries were ordered to begin the work at once to prevent a breach at the coming spring tide.

Strenuous efforts were made to put the colony in a state of defence ; Lieutenant MOORE of the *Royals* being sent to Moroca Post with a military detachment, to prevent the desertion of slaves to the Orinoco, while some light armed vessels were obtained from Antigua to protect the coasts.

On the 18th of October it was suggested to the Court that the old regulation of one white man to every fifty slaves on an estate, should be put in force. On the 31st of the same month a number of applications for manumissions of slaves were postponed on the ground that these were granted too easily, and that certain restrictions should be put upon them to prevent the freedom of a number of worthless persons, who might be dangerous to the public safety. On the same day the Protector of Indians for Mahaica and Mahaicony reported that the Postholder of Mahaicony had lately died and that he was unable to find a suitable person acquainted with the Indian language except one M. MAUVIELLE, who was a *free coloured person*, and as such excluded by the Court's Resolution of the 18th of May last. The Court refused to allow an

622  
/

1803

exception in this case, but told the Protector he must look out for another person.

Attempts were made to get rid of some of the officials who were notoriously attached to French principles, General GRINFIELD wanting to discharge and banish them from the colony, but the Court objected to this, the members speaking in favour of liberality, and standing out for their rights under the capitulation. Some of the Batavian soldiers had deserted to avoid becoming prisoners of war, which led to a Proclamation ordering their apprehension.

In the early part of 1804 it was reported to the Court that the inhabitants of Essequibo had complained of not receiving Proclamations. It was ordered on the 30th of January that in future they should be forwarded to the Commandeur of Essequibo, who would affix them to the sixteen customary places, and also cause them to be carried round to every estate by an express negro in a corial, such negro to be furnished with a written order to proprietors, attorneys and managers, asking them to make it appear by their signatures that the Proclamation had been exhibited, or, in such cases as might be considered necessary that a printed copy had been left.

On the 29th of February following forty-nine inhabitants of Essequibo signed the following petition, which was sent to the Governor :—

“ With the greatest respect, we the undersigned, Burghers resident on the West Sea Coast of Essequibo, take the liberty of addressing your Excellency. It has been an old and constant custom, established by law, that when a vacancy takes place in either of the Departments of Keisars or Financial Representatives, that Publications were sent round the colony by the Government slaves, from plantation to plantation, giving information of said vacancy to the freeholders, that those who were entitled might come forward with their votes and elect a representative of their choice.

“ We are under the necessity of declaring that this has not taken place, for on the removal of Mr. MACK from the Keisars to the Court of Policy, we were informed on enquiry that a person was already in that vacancy.

“ With serious sorrow we feel this infringement of our Rights and Privileges, and look forward with dread to the dangerous consequences of such outrageously impolitic innovations, and the motives which occasioned it can only be guessed at by us.

“ We flatter ourselves however that your Excellency’s superior understanding will suggest the real cause.

“ We therefore, by non-session of the Court of Policy, apply to your Excellency for redress, hoping and requesting that your Excellency will take the necessary measures for preventing in future the like infraction on that most sacred privilege, the Burgher right, also expressing a due adherence and obedience to the laws and customs of the colony, &c.”

It does not appear that any attempt had really been made to ignore the rights of the Burghers, but it was rather the difficulty in delivering the notices. The people believed that these notices were unfairly circulated with a view to the election of the nominee of a few.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### *GOVERNORS BEAUJON AND BENTINCK, 1804—1811.*

Arrival of Beaujon—War with Spain—Beaujon's death—Montgomerie succeeds—Petition to confirm him as Lieutenant-Governor—Arrival of Bentinck—Paper money—Demerara extended to the Bonasika creek—Disputes among Militia officers and Kiesheers—Slave trade abolished—Spanish privateers in the Pomeroon—Small Pox—A Burgher Officer wants to resign—Regulations for passports—The currency question settled—Fiscal Van Berckel attacked—Medical practitioners—Financial Representatives want their position defined—Difficulties of the planters.

**T**HE administration of Lieutenant-Colonel NICHOLSON did not last long as he was superseded by the popular Lieutenant-Governor BEAUJON, who returned on the 13th of August 1804. At the meeting of that date NICHOLSON informed the Court of the new arrival, when the two senior members were delegated to proceed to Government House and introduce him. BEAUJON passed through a guard of honour of the "Royals" and was conducted to the President's chair by NICHOLSON, after which he took the oath and addressed the Court, who were very pleased to see him back again.

During his short administration war was declared with Spain, and great fears were entertained of an invasion of the colony from Orinoco. On the 30th of January the Court considered what precautions would be necessary in case of an attack and it was recommended that three gun-boats be procured to guard the coast, the guns and ammunition to be supplied by the British Government, and all other expenses paid by the colony. The

members thought the coast too extensive to be defended by such a measure and that the benefit would not be equal to the cost, they decided however next day that the gun-boats should be procured if the crews, provisions and ammunition were provided from the Royal Navy.

BEAUJON died on the 17th of October 1805, after a short illness, at the age of forty-two. His government was satisfactory to all parties as is shown by the fact that, although there was a great deal of party feeling in the colony during what may be called the three terms of his administration, he was able to reconcile most of the differences. The *Royal Gazette* of October 19th, said :—

“ In him these colonies sustain a loss, the consequences of which we do not presume to calculate ; nor shall we attempt to portray a character, the noble qualities of which are far beyond the reach of our feeble pen :—We will only say that few men ever filled the high station to which he was called, with more dignity ; that for soundness of judgment he was equalled by few—for uprightness of heart, exceeded by none ; and we predict with confidence that time will raise his memory as a model of imitation for those who cherish Virtue and revere the unerring Laws of Justice.”

The following was the order of procession at his funeral on the 18th :—

The Troops and Volunteers with arms reversed.

The Clergyman and three Doctors who attended the deceased.

The Body

borne by eight non-commissioned Officers of Militia.

Pall Bearers—CHAS. CLIFTON, J. FORBES, H. CANTZLAAR, C. D. FORRESTER, C. J. RAPIN, J. C. GEHRICKE, A. VAN BRAAM, and T. DUIM, Esquires.

The Music.

The Family Representatives—THOS. CUMING, LACHLAN CUMING, P. F. TINNE and C. T. TINNE.

H. E. Brigadier-General MONTGOMERIE and Hon. F. P. VAN BEECKEL. Lt.-Col. MACRAE, Commanding the Demerara Militia.

Members of the Court of Policy.

Members of the Court of Justice.

Kiesers.

Financial Representatives.

President, Members and Registrars of Orphan Chamber.

Officers employed in the Civil Government,  
and a numerous train of gentlemen.

The Court of Policy met on the 19th under the presidency of Brigadier-General MONTGOMERIE, who said that on account of the unexpected and sudden death of Governor BEAUJON, and not knowing whether any provisions had been made for the administration of the Civil Government, he had called the present extraordinary meeting. On examining the late Governor's papers he had found the following instructions :—

“ Art. 27. It is our will and pleasure that the chief military command should at all times remain with the officer commanding the forces, whom we have also authorised to take over the Civil Government in the event of your absence or death, or of there being no person on the place specially appointed.”

In accordance with this the Brigadier-General thought it his duty to assume the administration, but before taking the oath he would like to know the feeling of the Court. The members having expressed their full acquiescence and declared themselves perfectly satisfied, he took the oath that he would well and truly execute the office of Governor and President of all the Colleges according to the best of his skill and knowledge, and according to the power granted by His Majesty ; he would duly and impartially administer justice, and in general execute, perform and observe all matters and things which were incumbent on him.

For several years previous the seat of government in Essequibo had become of less importance, while the offices and residence of the Commandeur were going to ruin. Several proposals were again made to remove it to some other locality, Lieguan being thought most suitable, but nothing was done. At the meeting of the Court of January 28th, 1806, it was reported that the house of the Commandeur was uninhabitable, and that he was obliged to live in the Colony House, where the Councillors of Justice lodged during the session. It was decided, on account of



the uncertainty as to whether a new town would be built in Essequebo, that certain alterations should be made in the Colony House to make it more convenient for Commandeur OUCKAMA.

On the 15th of February, Councillor CUMING read an address from the inhabitants, which he proposed should be forwarded to Mr. ADAM GORDON who had lately been appointed Agent of the Colony in London, to be laid before His Majesty's Minister, praying that Brigadier-General MONTGOMERIE might be continued in the Government, and stating that the Court and the inhabitants of the colony would consider this as an additional proof of His Majesty's benevolence. The Court concurred in this and agreed to forward it to the Agent, but although this was done MONTGOMERIE was not confirmed, probably because other arrangements had been made already.

Up to the present it appears that rum could be imported free from the West Indies, but on the petition of the inhabitants it was decided on the 29th of April, that a duty of two guilders per gallon should be imposed. At the same meeting the regulations as to export of timber were changed. Hitherto nothing but firewood had been allowed, but now it was agreed to permit colony wood to be exported on payment of thirty stivers per cubic foot.

On the 8th of May Lieutenant-Governor BENTINCK arrived, being escorted from the stelling by the members of the Court, after which the usual ceremonies of reading his Commission and taking the oath were gone through. In July he was granted f25,000 per annum, table money, from the Colonial Funds, and f5,000 as President of the Court of Justice, to commence from the day of his arrival.

The *Gazette* said the new Governor was a very personable man, and appeared in good health and spirits. He was, the editor understood, a relative of the Duke of Portland, and though born in Holland had spent a considerable

portion of his life in Britain. Having been formerly Governor of St. Vincent and not altogether unknown in Demerara, the happiest consequences might confidently be expected to result from his administration. A very elegant entertainment was given to BENTINOK at the Freemason's Tavern, London, by the merchants and planters of the colony resident there, previous to his leaving, and he seems to have got on very well with the colonists, being ultimately recalled for treating the Court of Policy with more respect than the Secretary for the Colonies.

Considerable difficulty and inconvenience was again caused in the colony by the want of small pieces of money. Several expedients had been adopted, such as cutting up the Spanish dollar into several pieces, but the demand for small coin kept on increasing. Paper money had been introduced into Berbice several years before and for convenience these "Goods," as they were called, were current in Demerara. The Court agreed to issue £72,000 "Goods by the Colony Essequibo and Demerara" on the 31st of July, and decided that after one month no person should be compelled to accept Berbice paper money. The new "Goods" were to be signed by two to four members of the Court, and countersigned by the Colonial Receiver. The lowest denomination was one guilder, of which four thousand were issued, the values decreasing in number until the highest was reached, which were twenty of a hundred guilders each. Every one was bound to accept them and they would be received for taxes, while the Colonial revenues were always to be held liable for the amount in circulation.

As had been anticipated the war with Spain led to several privateering raids on the colony. In April ROBERT PATTERSON petitioned the Court to indemnify him for the loss of his schooner and negroes, which had been taken by the Spaniards when in the service of the colony and under the command of a Naval Officer. On the 30th of

October the Combined Court granted him £5,000, and £1,800 to pay for a slave pilot belonging to D. ARMSTRONG who had been also captured on the schooner.

The inhabitants of the East Coast of Essequibo between the Boeraserie and Bonasika Creeks petitioned to be put under the jurisdiction of Demerara in October, and as the Court was of opinion that there could be no objection, a Publication was issued November the 22nd stating that after the 1st of January 1807 the boundary of Demerara would extend to the Bonasika Creek.

The hot-temper of the gentlemen of this period was shown in many cases. A Militia General Order was published April 26th, 1806, declaring that as Major ARTHUR BLAIR, Commandant of the Demerara Cavalry, had declared to His Excellency that he would not in all points obey the orders of the Lieutenant-Colonel commanding all Colonial Corps, although this was specified in his commission, His Excellency could not permit so palpable a disobedience of orders, and therefore felt himself under the necessity of superseding him. The Governor regretted exceedingly that such a measure should be required for the good of the service, and would feel happy to give the Officer on whom the command devolved every necessary support for the respectability and discipline of the Corps.

Captain FARQUHAR MACRAE had just been appointed Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant, and it appears that there must have been some ill-feeling between him and BLAIR. The *Gazette* of April 26th, in referring to the matter, said that the gentlemen composing the Corps of Royal Demerary Cavalry met that day at the Union Coffee House to consider the General Order, when they unanimously agreed to send in their resignations to Major BLAIR. "Some well written resolutions, expressive of their reasons, and their attachment to the Major, were entered into and signed by all present, and a sword value 100 guineas voted."

The result of the difficulty was reported in the paper of the following Saturday. On Tuesday the 29th, Captain F. MACRAE, a man highly respected for his private worth, died, "whose loss must be considered as a public calamity." His death was the result of a wound received in adjusting an affair of honour with A. BLAIB, Esq., in consequence of a difference arising out of the new appointment, and increased by the subject being improperly agitated at a meeting of the Sons of St. GEORGE. The parties met on Sunday morning near La Penitence and exchanged shots at twelve paces, MACRAE falling at the first fire with a ball above the right hip. "Every possible assistance was immediately afforded, and he was taken to the hospitable and friendly mansion of the Hon. A. MEEETENS. The wound was not thought serious at first, but the following morning it assumed an unfavourable aspect. In this most trying situation, the high sense he entertained of that honour which he had vindicated, prevented him from saying who had inflicted the wound. His body was conveyed from *Rome* to the *New Hope*, where it was interred on Wednesday."

A meeting of the Officers of the first Battalion and the Rifle Corps was held in the Union Coffee House on May 5th to consider the cause and merits of the misunderstanding, when MACRAE was justified, and it was decided to erect a monument of marble in the form of a pyramid and place it in the centre of the new Parade Ground\* and also to wear mourning for three months.

A year later, April 29th, 1807, the Governor informed the Court that when Mr. JAMES ROBERTSON had been required to attend a Court of Enquiry on Captain OSBORN for refusing to act on an expedition against Bush Negroes he had declined and stated that he did not consider the Burghers bound to go on such expedi-

\* It does not appear that this was ever done.

tions. The Court resolved to acquaint Captain ROBERTSON with their indignation at his disobedience to his superior officers and at the disrespectful and improper manner in which he had expressed his opinion, at the same time ordering him to be reprimanded.

At the same meeting the case of the Kiesheers of Essequibo was referred to. Five of them had signed a letter to the Court, which was considered so impertinent that a Proclamation had been issued on the 28th of March dismissing them from their offices and calling for a new election. One of them had since apologised and was allowed to retain his seat.

The difficulty arose from the extension of the boundaries of Demerara to the Bonasika, the Governor informing the Court on the 23rd of February that as Mr. MAOK was an inhabitant of the district newly incorporated with Demerara and could no longer represent Essequibo, a new nomination had been called to replace him. The Board of Electors had questioned the vacancy, saying they did not consider the change of jurisdiction sufficient, but as Mr. MAOK had not acted as he ought to have done they thought it best to make a new nomination. The Court's annoyance may be seen from the words of their resolution :—

“ The Court has read with the utmost surprise the remarks which accompany the nomination sent in by the Electors, from which it would appear that they arrogate to themselves the right of deposing members of the Court for pretended misconduct, and of appointing others in their room as they may think fit.”

They also refused to accept the nomination and ordered it to be returned to the Board with a demand for another. Councillor KNOLLMAN was not quite at one with the others, he being of opinion that the extension of the boundary was contrary to the articles of Capitulation. The Governor also stated that he understood protests were preparing against the extension by both the Electors and Court of Justice of Essequibo.

At the meeting of March 25th a new nomination was laid over, with the excuses of the Electors. The Governor then read some extracts from letters of the Secretary of State wherein it was stated that the College of Electors and Court of Policy should consist of persons well-affected to His Majesty's Government, and he was directed to remove such as he should judge expedient. He would therefore call for a new election of Kiesheers and encourage the British inhabitants to become candidates. He had the King's commands to adopt the principle of electing these for a definite time as far as might be consonant with the constitution, which he thought would be a general benefit. He also thought it might be expedient to have only one Supreme Court of Justice for both rivers. In the excuse of the Electors they had ignored the main ground of complaint, he would therefore make use of the power given him by his instructions and supersede all except Messrs. CLIFTON and ARMSTRONG who had disapproved of the action of the majority, he would also return the present nomination and call on the inhabitants to vote for new Electors. Finally this being a matter in which he acted as His Majesty's representative no discussion could be allowed.

This arbitrary action of Governor BENTINCK, gave a severe check to the Dutch element, who were continually crying out against all new measures, good, bad, or indifferent, and saying they were breaches of the Capitulation. Not enjoying good health, he left the colony on the 2nd of May. Before leaving he represented the difficulty of a Military gentleman being President of the Court of Justice, he had therefore appointed Mr. HEYLIGER to that office, while BRIGADIER-GENERAL MONTGOMERIE would act as Civil Governor. The Members agreed to this, at the same time expressing their concern for the cause of his leaving and their best wishes for his recovery.

At the same meeting it was reported from a dispatch of

the Secretary of State that a Bill for abolishing the Slave trade was passing through Parliament. The Court said that this news was altogether so unexpected, and of such an important nature that they could not immediately express their opinion. This important Act had been already passed on the 25th of March and declared that all manner of dealing in slaves from Africa was to be utterly abolished from the 1st of May following, and so upset the calculations of the planters that there naturally arose the cry of ruin. The members of the Court were however very quiet, not even entering a protest, although they must have felt very strongly in the matter.

MONTGOMERIE gave over the administration to Lieutenant Colonel NICHOLSON, his superior officer, on the 14th of September, who in turn gave place to Colonel Ross on the 25th of June 1808. NICHOLSON is said to have been a stout, portly man, about sixty years old, with a good-humoured countenance, his hair cut strictly according to regimental orders, and tied in a thick queue\*

The difficulties with the Spanish privateers still continued, and the planters of the Aroabisce Coast petitioned the Court in November 1807, for protection against their raids. For several years past they had been subject to annoyance from Spanish Privateers and could get no relief. They molested the whole coast more or less, but particularly that portion between Lots 45 and 55, which from their situation were peculiarly open to their inroads. ] They lurked in the bush and rendered abortive all precautions and vigilance, so that not a canoe or fisherman could escape them. They captured slaves and stole the provisions from the grounds. They were so daring as to come into the trenches openly and walk on the dams at mid-day, with as much unconcern as if they were on their own estates. On the 2nd of October previous, at about four o'clock in the afternoon, a

\* St. Clair's Residence in the West Indies.

Spanish launch came into the trench of Pln. 45, and was about to carry off the plantation boat—only waiting for the tide to float her—when information coming to the Manager, Mr. GORING, he and two other gentlemen armed themselves and started for the landing, by way of the cotton field to avoid being seen. They found the Spaniards walking on the dam, armed, with their muskets slung on their necks, and in the most careless attitudes imaginable. Mr. GORING and his friends approached them unperceived and fired, but without effect, the enemy returning the fire and then running away. Being pursued they took to the water and swam to their launch, which went alongside the plantation schooner, where twelve or fourteen Spaniards jumped out, and rowing as fast as possible and firing all the time, escaped to their privateer, leaving in their haste two muskets and a dagger. About an hour before, the same people had carried off a boat, loaded with plantains, which had just anchored at Lot 55, and during the same night, the proprietor being unfortunately absent, all the slaves from same estate, except three who were sick and unable to walk. They also ransacked the dwelling-house, and took everything that could be of use to them. On Thursday previous, when the coast might have been supposed clear because it was reported that several British privateers were cruising off it, Mr. HINLEY of No, 52 had got his boat out intending to send her away for supplies, when he was fortunately prevented by the arrival of two gentlemen, two ladies and as many children, whom the Spaniards had captured the day before in a boat belonging to Pln *Aberdeen*. These events had created great consternation on the coast, because there were several ladies, cut off from communication with the rest of the coast, with no possibility of retreat in case of need, except such as the wild woods afforded. When they wanted provisions they feared to send any craft to sea in the teeth of the enemy, the only alternative being



a land journey of three miles through the bush, a negro having to carry two bunches of plantains weighing a hundred and forty pounds. To prevent the risk of their capture, they had therefore either to endanger the lives and health of the negroes by fatigue, or let them starve, while in case of sickness, medical assistance could not be obtained, nor could they procure the necessaries of life much less comforts in sickness. "What a horrid situation! Surely it has no parallel! All could be eradicated by furnishing needful protection and establishing roads to other parts of the Coast. We pay the same taxes and are subject to the same penalties as other parts of the colony. Why not allow us to participate in the good? God knows we have enough of the bad!"

A similar petition from most of the planters on the West Coast of Essequibo was read at the same meeting, the Court deciding to do all they could and report the matter to His Majesty's Government. The colony then owned a sloop named the *Demerary*, which was properly commissioned as a King's ship, and employed as a cruiser to protect the coast. It was reported at this session that one of the Spanish prisoners taken on board a launch lately captured by the *Demerary* had sent a Memorial to the Governor stating that the people in the Orinoco were inclined to give up privateering, and would rather carry on a regular trade with the colony, as they did with Trinidad, provided the vessels were secure from capture beyond ten leagues from the coast. The Governor forwarded a copy to the Admiral, the result appearing to be the expedition of CHARLES WATERTON with despatches from Admiral COLLINGWOOD to DON FELIPE DE YNCIARTE in August, 1808, an account of which will be found in his "Wanderings."

Small pox was prevalent in the colony at this time, and a Proclamation was issued forbidding inoculation on pain of a fine of £6,000, while any person not giving notice on

discovering the disease was liable to pay *f*3,000. The Surgeon-Major of the Colonial Hospital was very much dissatisfied with the administration of his department and wrote a letter which was read January 25th, 1808, resigning his post. During the two years which had elapsed since the death of Governor BEAUJON, he said, there had been nothing for him but a series of most unpleasant and vexatious circumstances. He hoped his successor might be able to procure for the wretched beings under his care those comforts which he apprehended had been withheld on his account. He had struggled by repeated petitions to obtain alleviation of their sufferings but without results. The Court was indignant at the "highly improper and disrespectful language and unfounded and scurrilous reflections" contained in the letter, and dismissed him, at the same time appointing Dr. J. W. DUNKIN to the vacant office.

The onerous duties of a Burgher Captain at this time may be seen from a petition of Captain C. M. BROTHEYSON of the Sand Hills, to be allowed to resign, dated October 4th, 1808. He had acted since 1801 as Ensign, First and Second Lieutenant, and Captain of Burghers, but from the largeness of his family and his few negroes, was quite unable to discharge his duties any longer. It required a boat and four hands for at least ten days, besides his own time, to collect the quarterly returns of his division, and he was once actually engaged for fourteen days. It was no relief whatever to compel the inhabitants to attend at his house, as in the first place he would have to give them notice, and then, from the situation of the country, entertain them when there. The Burgher Captain was also expected to forward all Publications, a duty necessarily attended with much loss of time in such an extensive division as his; he was also compelled to collect people at his house and entertain them, when they came to swear to

their revenues, slaves, &c. He was therefore compelled from these reasons to ask the Court to accept his resignation.

It was however decided that they could not do this, but in consideration of the peculiar circumstances of that particular district, they would make some distinct provision. Accordingly, they resolved that Captain BROTHERTON be allowed to collect his returns half-yearly instead of quarterly ; the Upper District commencing on the West Bank from above Georgia and on the East Bank from Soesdyk as far as the settlements extended. The returns were to be transmitted to the Brigade-Major on the 15th of January and 15th of July, while to afford him some compensation for his trouble and loss of time, fifty Joes would be paid him annually in half-yearly instalments. Captain BRANDES of the Green Banner was to collect the returns quarterly from the lower district of the Demerara, and these were to be properly made out on pain of prosecution for neglect of duty.

Governor ROSS, like BENTINCK, did not enjoy good health in Demerara, and consequently was obliged to give over the government to General DALRYMPLE on the 3rd of April 1809. WATERBTON said of ROSS, that this brave officer and truly just man was beloved to enthusiasm by the inhabitants of Demerara. Before leaving he was presented with an address expressive of their gratitude for his many services while in charge of the colony, and at the same time, as a more substantial mark of appreciation, a sword and a purse of fifteen hundred guineas. DALRYMPLE was soon superseded by BENTINCK, who returned and took over the administration on the 19th of May following.

Among the Proclamations of 1809 was one reviving the old law that prohibited any one leaving the colony without due notification through the Secretary's office at least two weeks before. Masters of vessels taking any person on

board without a pass or permit from the Governor incurred a fine for each of six thousand guilders. No slaves were to be taken away without the same notice except in the case of domestics leaving with their masters. The list of persons leaving was published in the *Royal Gazette* up to the time of the emancipation, when that and so many other old usages fell to the ground.

The same year is notable for a scheme to introduce a paper and silver currency, which was adopted and lasted until the establishment of Banks. Hitherto the difficulties in connection with the currency caused continual trouble, and various means were resorted to at different times to get small coin. Many of the gold Joes had been so filed and plugged as to be almost unrecognisable, having to be taken by weight. Spanish dollars were, by proclamation of February 11th 1809, to have a piece cut out and pass for three bits, while the coin so mutilated was to be current for three guilders. Joes were also cut in four pieces, each of which was taken for two dollars. As may be supposed, this mutilated currency became more and more defaced and very troublesome to handle, it was therefore necessary to do something. Some gentlemen from Demerara having consulted Sir JOSEPH BANKS, he advised that the bullion, which had been already called in and replaced by Colonial "goods," should be invested in English government securities. An act could then be passed that this be vested as an inalienable deposit destined to support the circulation of the colony paper, the amount in circulation and state of the fund being annually published and rules adopted to regulate the issue and prevent it much exceeding the fund invested. This, he said, would convert the circulation from an unproductive medium of commerce to a productive deposit, and the interest and compound interest would accumulate and be a source of revenue.

The proposition was partly carried out, the plugged and

mutilated Joes producing over £33,000, about £12,000 of which was applied to coining silver money and the remainder invested as a guarantee for the new paper.

The office of Fiscal received some consideration on the 31st of January, 1810, the Governor stating that the system of leaving them to prosecute at their own risk was not adequate when a conviction was obtained, while when nonsuited it was of course nothing. It appeared to him that the great risk for such a small sum of money, besides the odium which, however unjustly, attached to their actions, must frequently deter even the most public-spirited Fiscal from commencing proceedings, and this must unavoidably tend to defeat the ends of justice. He would like the Court to consider whether it would not be better that a fixed salary be given in lieu of the third share of the fines. The Court was not prepared without due consideration to decide, but resolved that the Fiscal and Secretary be asked to draw up a plan.

The then Fiscal of Demerara, F. P. VAN BEEKEL was probably the most unpopular man in the colony, he being generally considered as looking after his own interests regardless of right or justice. That there was some truth in the scandalous stories circulated against his character will be seen in a later chapter, we are only now concerned with an attempt of certain "young bloods" to chastise him. The facts may be gleaned from the Proclamation dated November 25th, 1810, which offered five hundred pounds reward and a free pardon, for information:—

"Whereas a number of armed white men about the hour of three this morning broke into the house of the Fiscal\*, with evident intent to commit murder; that failing in their attempt they gagged and pinioned one of the negroes, took him on board a schooner in the river at the stelling of W. HEATHCOTE, Esq., and again set him ashore on the stelling of MESSRS. TELFORD & NAGHTEN, &c."

\* Probably the building lately taken down, in which the Colonial Bank so long carried on its business.

This offer of the Government was supplemented by another of eight hundred guilders raised by the inhabitants, while, as it was supposed that the offenders had been brought from Berbice by the Fiscal's enemies, five hundred pounds reward was offered in that colony as well. The *Royal Gazette*, in an editorial's aid the attempt was not more remarkable for its singularity than its daringness. It will be interesting to the admirers of CHARLES WATERTON to know that above the signature of "STRAVIT," he wrote some latin verses on this affair which were published in the *Gazette* of December 8th. The following extract shows the style, and a part of a translation by another hand will prove that the colony was not wanting in classical scholars at this time :—

" Nocte quâdem tenebrosa,  
Turba trux et vitiosa,  
Morte volens furiosa.

Summum nostrum magistratum,  
Letho dare, intrat latum,  
Tectum, sed per faustum fatum."

" In dead of night when all was wrap'd around  
In misty darkness and in sleep profound,  
A furious mob with wicked purpose bent  
To our first magistrate's large mansion went,  
And fiercely entered with a vile intent.  
But fate propitious sav'd him from the hand  
Of those who sought him—and the furious band,  
Having in vain search'd all the fabric o'er  
Retreated quickly and were seen no more.  
And whither fled, alas ! none else can tell  
Some think far off, while others here they dwell."

It appears that Mr. VAN BERCKEL made a rather ignominious retreat when the party broke into the house, leaving his wife to bear the brunt of the assault, while he lay hidden in the lobby. Hearing a gun, which alarmed them, his assailants fled before they could search the house. Suspicion fell upon some Scotchmen who had been lately

prosecuted by the Fiscal, but no one was ever brought to justice on account of the matter.

The Governor called the attention of the Court on the 1st of February, 1810, to the necessity for some regulations for medical practitioners. Fatal consequences, he said, could but arrive, and might already have been experienced, from the unlimited freedom which all persons styling themselves practitioners of physic and surgery had enjoyed, and from the daily increase in their number, he, without pretending to cast any reflection on their ability, thought it necessary that something should be done. A member observed that a law to compel their examination by competent persons was passed, but it had fallen into oblivion. It was therefore resolved "that all persons not being graduates of some University or of the College of Physicians, who now or in future be desirous of practising Physic and Surgery, shall qualify themselves by undergoing an examination by a *Collegium Medicum* to be established." In future they were to exhibit their diplomas to the Court on arrival, and the College was to consist of Drs. WADDELL, DUNKIN, SMITH, WOLFF and GILL.

Mr. A. FLEISCHMAN petitioned the Court on May 3rd 1810 for the exclusive privilege of running his boat as a packet from Fort Island to Town. He had noticed during the meetings of the Court of Justice of Essequibo, that many persons were obliged to remain longer than they wished, because they had no means of conveyance. He was in possession of a suitable craft, commanded by a white man, and would let it make a weekly trip to Stabroek and back, and carry the despatches of the government free. The Court refused to give him any monopoly.

At the meeting of the Combined Court of December 4th the Financial Representatives asked for a definition of their duties. By the minutes of the Court it appeared that in 1796 six were elected in place of four Keisheers who had

formerly sat in that capacity. It appeared to them that it was their privilege not only to impose taxes but also to superintend the expenditure. Unless these powers were vested in them it was their opinion that it was useless for them to sit with the Court of Policy. It was resolved that no material change in the constitution could take place without the consent of the Sovereign, and the Financial Representatives were asked to obtain the views of the inhabitants on the matter and forward a memorial for transmission to His Majesty's Government; meanwhile in cases of extraordinary expenditure they would be consulted. Whether anything further was done in the matter does not appear; it arose from the enormous cost of a Bush Expedition which necessitated additional taxes, and was incurred by the government without reference to the Combined Court.

PETER GRANT, having been elected to the Court of Policy, asked the meeting of the 6th of December to allow him to decline on account of failing health which required a change of climate, but they decided this excuse was not sufficient and if he refused to sit he would be liable to the fine of £3,000.

5  
622  
The years 1811-12 were very disastrous to the planters, especially to those who cultivated only sugar. On the 30th of November 1811, a meeting of sugar planters was held in Marshall's Hotel to consider the alarming state of things and the ruin that stared them in the face. The Hon. JOSEPH BATE took the Chair and among those present were Messrs. C. WATERBTON, C. EDMONSTONE, P. ROSE, and N. M. MANGET. It was then stated that the produce of the colony in ordinary years amounted to £1,860,000, but on account of the deteriorated value of produce it had decreased to £1,200,000. This they considered due to the destructive system of warfare adopted by the implacable enemy of Great Britain, and might be alleviated if permission had



been given to export produce to the United States. It was resolved to petition both houses of Parliament to allow the use of sugar in distilleries and the interchange of produce with the States.

The situation in the West Indies was really very critical at this period. The supply of sugar had been increased as far as Great Britain was concerned by the produce of the conquered Dutch and French colonies, while the continental peoples were almost entirely deprived of it by Bonaparte closing their ports, so that sugar was five or six shillings a pound where it could be obtained at all. On account of the scarcity of grain, sugar had been allowed to be used in distilleries, but now the old prohibition was again enforced, so that this outlet was closed. Slaves rose in price as soon as the African trade was abolished, and this of course meant increased cost of production. When St. Domingo fell out of her place as a sugar colony there naturally followed a rise in price of her staple, but now Cuba had almost reached the output of the neighbouring isle in its best days. The British Colonies also increased their sugar production, it being calculated to amount to about 100,000 tons per annum over that of the previous decade. The American market was closed, and refining in the colonies was not allowed, while it was calculated that one eighth of the sugar shipped was lost by drainage in the holds of vessels. The British empire consumed about 225,000 hhds. while the colonies produced 150,000 hhds. beyond this, being more than double the amount exported. In January 1811 the bonded stores of the British ports were filled with colonial produce, waiting for buyers, and a Parliamentary Committee was appointed to consider the state of affairs. They reported on the 7th of March 1811, that the prevalence of commercial distress arose from extensive speculations, which followed the opening of South American markets in the Brazils and elsewhere, and that a great part of the returns for

goods exported were sugars, the value of which could not be realised. The average price at this time was only about 34s. 11d. and the produce of Demerara and Essequibo amounted to about 18,000 hhds. Coffee and cotton still kept their places, about twelve million pounds of the former and ten million of the latter being estimated as the produce of 1811.

In reviewing the state of the colony in 1812, the Honourable JOSEPH BEEBE told the Court to look back a few years and see what profit was made on cotton in proportion to the number of negroes. On three estates under his charge in 1799-1800 the returns were £40,000 sterling, while the expenses were not more than two-thirds of what they were now. For the previous three years the same proprietor had done no more than pay expenses, not even getting interest for his capital. The coffee estates since 1809 however were doing far worse than this. He had no reason to look abroad for examples, seeing that they came home to him in his business. He was proprietor of Pln. *Best*, a sugar estate with 317 negroes, the produce of which was 650,000 pounds of sugar and 45,000 glns. of rum, while Pln. *Phœnix*, his coffee plantation, with 232 negroes produced only 40,000 pounds, worth about the same price per pound as sugar. Sugar and coffee were valued at 3 stivers and cotton at  $12\frac{1}{2}$  stivers per pound, while rum was worth 15 stivers per gallon.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### *ELIMINATION OF DUTCH IDEAS UNDER CARMICHAEL AND MURRAY, 1812—1822.*

Union of Demerara and Essequibo—Removal of offices from Fort Island—Slave instruction—Bentinck recalled—Carmichael takes over the administration—His character—The Van Berckel scandal—Abolition of the Keisheers—The Governor's opinion—The American war—Privateers off the coast—Sinking of H.M.S. Peacock by the Hornet—Carmichael's death—Trade depressed—Murray appointed Lieutenant-Governor—Difficulties in connection with the old Court of Justice—President Henry—Anxiety as to the disposal of the colony at the peace—Cession to Great Britain for £3,000,000—Exports in 1814—Lansdowne's opinion on the cession—Murray's disputes with the President—Henry resigns and is succeeded by Rough—Case of *Ross v. Murray*—Rough is suspended by the Governor—Rough appeals to Privy Council—Account of the dispute—A duel on the beach—Gambling and sporting—Planters make a stand against the Anti-Slavery party.

ONE of the last Proclamations of Governor BENTINCK was that of April 1st, 1812, uniting the Courts of Justice of both rivers, so that from that time all distinctions between Essequibo and Demerara were finally abolished. The Commandeur and several other officials also necessarily lost their situations, while the archives of the old colony were brought to Georgetown. These changes led to a number of petitions to the Court for compensation for losses sustained by removal of the capital and offices. On the 20th of October, J. VAN RODEN asked for compensation because his house had become useless, but this was refused, while the petition of E. J. BOTER for a piece of land to which to remove his house, was referred to the Governor with a recommendation that it should be granted.

622

The widow DE HASE in her petition read on the 27th of the same month, said she was a poor woman destitute of everything but a house on Fort Island. On account of the late alterations and almost general desertion of the island she was under the necessity of leaving also, but for want of means was unable to do so, she therefore begged for a small spot of ground in or near town, and the sum necessary to remove her house. The Court granted her fifty Joes, and referred her to the Governor for the land. The same day the petition of J. J. L. MOLIERE was considered. He said the Court had already granted him remuneration for his losses in being obliged to leave Fort Island, and for the trouble he had taken in bringing over the papers of the Secretary's Office of Essequibo, and putting them in proper order in the Church of Demerara\*, and the Governor had also continued his office of Secretary *ad interim* to take charge of the documents. He now asked for a fixed salary, as his position was not defined, and the Court granted him a hundred Joes per annum as long as he was in charge of the office.

The Court of Policy by a Proclamation of May 25th, 1811, had placed restrictions on the assembling of slaves at night, which operated against their attending the schools and chapels of the missionaries. This was disallowed by the British Government at the request of the Anti-Slavery party and the Missionary Society, and BENTINCK commanded to recall it at once. No restrictions were to be placed on the instruction of slaves as long as it took place on the estate and with permission of the authorities, while all places of worship were to be registered, and the doors kept open during the time of service or instruction. Instead of recalling the obnoxious Proclamation, BENTINCK submitted the matter to the Court of Policy which occasioned some delay, the result being that the

\* This was the old room in the Court House lately replaced by St. George's Church.

Secretary for the Colonies wrote on the 24th of February 1812, telling him that if, by referring the matter to the Court he meant that they should determine the manner of recalling, he would only express regret at the delay, but if it was intended that they should decide on the expediency of carrying out his (the Secretary's) instructions then he could not sufficiently express his surprise and dissatisfaction that the Governor "should have presumed to make the Prince REGENT's commands contingent upon the approbation of the Court."

A despatch dated the following day informed BENTINCK that he was recalled, and another of the same date told Major-General HUGH LYLE CARMICHAEL—then Commander of the troops—to take over the civil administration of the Colony. CARMICHAEL was also informed that some one would soon be appointed as Governor who would be in possession of the views of His Majesty's Government, and therefore it would not be advisable that any material alterations in the administrative system should be made, but he need not consider himself precluded from enquiring into abuses, or from applying immediate corrections if necessary. If the obnoxious Proclamation had not been recalled he was directed to take the first opportunity of making it publicly known that no other limits to the right of instruction were to be enforced than those ordered in his letter to BENTINCK.

CARMICHAEL had already made himself very popular in the colony, the inhabitants presenting him with a testimonial of their appreciation, so that they were rather pleased to have him as acting Lieutenant-Governor. According to WATERTON :—

"The General had one of the most difficult tempers in the world to manage. His disposition was generous, but at the same time it was exceedingly fiery ; although his ire soon subsided unless it had received extraordinary and repeated provocation. He had such a profound veneration for royalty, that I do believe he would have sent his own

brother out of the house had he heard him speak with levity of the Prince REGENT of England. In person he was shrivelled and weatherbeaten, and of diminutive stature ; but he was wonderfully active and vigorous in mind."

It may be added that he almost worshipped the British Constitution, which he considered the acme of perfection, and as a matter of course all others far inferior. He was also thoroughly honest, a hater of shams, and a man to do what he thought right, utterly regardless of consequences.

BENTINOK had already instituted an enquiry into certain charges against Mr. VAN BERCKEL, the Fiscal, in the course of which that official was suspended but reinstated afterwards by CARMICHAEL. The acts complained of included compromising offences for money, murder of a negro boy, detaining a slave for his own use on pretence that the owner could not show a legal title and making no entry, granting permission to sell rum in illegal quantities, and compounding with a rum seller for money, all these having occurred in 1802-4. The scandal arose through the appointment of Mr. THOMAS FRANKLAND, an advocate, as President of the Court of Justice, the Fiscal considering that he had the best right to the office, now that the Governor was considered unsuitable from his imperfect knowledge of Dutch law. Accordingly, Mr. VAN BERCKEL reported that FRANKLAND was unfit to be President as he had been already twice convicted before the Court, once for perjury and the other time for contempt. In defending himself FRANKLAND made grave charges against VAN BERCKEL, which led to a general investigation, in the course of which it appeared that the Fiscal as advocate had committed forgery in connection with a case in which FRANKLAND was the counsel on the other side, and then turned round and charged the latter with perjury on the strength of the forged document. One charge led to another, things coming out in the enquiry implicating several other officials, so that the Governor had

plenty of work on his hands. One of the results of this was that the English language was introduced into the Courts, a reform on the Dutch system which gave great satisfaction to the English.

Another move in the same direction was that of abolishing the Keisheers as a separate body and assigning their duties to the Financial Representatives, while the union of the Courts of the two rivers was a serious blow to the "ancient laws and customs." The Governor told the Court of Policy on the 7th of September that by the seventh article of his instructions, he was directed to take especial care that the members chosen were fit and proper persons, cordially disposed to His Majesty's person and the government of the colony. The Keisheers had nominated Mr. HEYLIGER, who the Governor understood to be an alien, only permitted to remain in these British dominions by indulgence, and who had not concealed his favourable sentiments towards the French nation. When the administration fell on him he had lamented the cause and told His Majesty's Ministers that he would steadily perform his duties whether civil or military without partiality or favour. It was said that some disunion existed, and it was his anxious wish to reconcile all parties and lean to no man or body of men that did not appear to be actuated by principles of public spirit. Animated by this principle his ideas were naturally attracted to that purest of all governments, the British Constitution.

By the capitulation, the Governor said, the ancient laws of Holland were to remain in force. In the Dutch government the College of Keisheers formed a main pillar, originally founded upon the broad basis of free election. This was presumed by some persons to be a permanent appointment for life, but for this there was no law, and probably such was not the original intention. The higher Courts were formed by this Board of Electors—upon their returns

in the first instance depended the laws of the Colony and their just administration. As the Courts of Policy and Justice then stood there could be no doubt that wise and beneficent statutes would alone be extant and be permitted to remain, and that their operation would be directed by virtuous and impartial judges. While they were grateful to the Electors for that boon—as it was valuable—they should be the more anxious to guard and preserve it inviolable. When the civil administration was committed to his care, as a British Officer his utmost anxiety was of course to meet the wishes of his Sovereign, which could only be accomplished by pursuing such measures as were most likely to contribute to the good of the colony. With this view particular instructions were given him. In the second article a due and impartial administration of justice was directed. By the fourth the administration was to be exercised in conformity with the Ancient Institutions, subject to such alterations, regulations, and improvements as had been since made and approved, and subject also to such directions as the Governor should then or thereafter receive; nevertheless all the executive power was to be vested solely in him, all such public acts and judicial proceedings as were before done in the name of the Dutch Government being henceforth done in the name of His Majesty. By the fifth article the Governor and Court of Policy had the right to pass laws subject to the King's approbation, and the Governor when he deemed it expedient was empowered to suspend the operation of laws. On assuming the government the Royal commands had been conveyed to him "that upon enquiry into abuses in any Department of Government, should there be reason to suspect their existence and such be found, an immediate corrective was to be applied."

At the time the orders for the union of the colonies were communicated, as also the plan then being carried out as recommended by Mr. HEYLIGER, he thought it proper to



reject that mode, as it did not appear likely to accomplish the object of His Majesty's Ministers, and as also it had occurred to him that the Keisheers required a more efficient change than mere reduction of numbers. There were however some reasons at the moment for not dissolving that body with the former Court of Justice elected by them. That cause did not then exist and there appeared an urgent necessity for exercising the power vested in him, and obeying His Majesty's instruction as to "proper persons taking their seats in the Courts and an impartial administration of Justice." The Keisheers should be convinced that their seats were not for life, in which vicissitudes might occur to render them ineligible for the situation. It appeared to him reasonable and proper that the proprietors and freeholders who delegated them should have their privilege periodically restored, as was practised in that most perfect model of all legislatures, the British Parliament. The Dutch Jurisprudence appeared to him to be founded on the most liberal and expanded principles of equity and justice, securing every man his just right, whether consisting of honour and distinction in the State, or wealth and property obtained by honourable and honest industry.

He then went on to speak of the nominations in question—two *Dutchmen*, Messrs. J. S. MASSE and V. HEYLIGER—which he thought indicated a disposition in the majority not lawfully consistent with loyalty and true patriotism, or that the Keisheers were so unacquainted with that reputable community as to be unable to make a proper selection. He therefore thought it conducive to the public good to dispense with their services, and that the election should revert to its original source, on which occasion he proposed to extend the right of suffrage to those who paid income tax equivalent to twenty-five negroes, by which the learned professions and commerce would have a voice in the representation, and he would submit to their

judgment how far proxies and multiple voting might be abolished.

As there might be many persons disposed to misconstrue and pervert the best intentions, he thought it proper to disclaim the most remote objection to either of the nominees on account of nationality, at the same time he thought the conduct of the Keisheers would have had more appearance of partiality if they had returned one Englishman. It had always been his sentiments that the Dutch should bear a just proportion in the Legislature and administration of Justice, but these should certainly be confined to persons of known loyalty to the Government of Holland previous to its becoming a French province. He knew many respectable persons of that nation and would be highly gratified to see them co-operating with the English for the general good without regard to party or national prejudice. "In every country where the British flag flies the ascendancy should be with it, and as long as Holland is in its present state of subjugation—however its ancient laws may be respected by capitulation—the executive Government must be English."

When commanded to assume the administration he expected labour, difficulty and opposition, for which his mind was prepared, although then feeble in health. Now, being sufficiently restored, he had the pleasure of assuring the Court that until his Prince ordered him to resign that post of honour, he would never lose sight of that military principle which led and inspired the British Army, "*Nec aspera terrent,*" and when a conscious discharge of duty impelled him, he would obey his Sovereign in attempting and endeavouring to accomplish every means that might tend to the good of Demerary.

The commands of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent as to the instruction of negroes seemed to have been misunderstood in some cases, he had therefore published an

explanation of the Proclamation of April 7th previous, and would give instructions to the Burgher Captains, which with due discretion and the assistance of gentlemen of property, would not only obviate the mischief that might arise from indiscriminate nocturnal assemblages of the negroes, but be highly beneficial, by the missionaries instilling proper principles of plain morality and subordination with the Christian Religion. Where public opportunities and encouragement were given at proper times and on Sundays or other days, there could not then be a pretext for clandestine assemblages in the night. By those means the commands of "Our Gracious Sovereign" would be obeyed and there would be, he trusted, a gratification in seeing every class more happy and contented with each other, by humane care and patronage on the one part, and respect, gratitude and subordination on the other. One step towards the latter object might be an offer of pardon to those brigands or runaways in the woods, provided they returned to their duties in a month after notification. If that did not succeed, vigorous measures would have to be pursued to prevent them forming an independent society, to which the colony would be under annual tribute, and which might expose it to the horrible effects of insurrection and rebellion.

With respect to the Indians, he had to state that the generous reception of the Caribs and other tribes from the Essequibo, seemed to have induced the Arawacks from that river, as well as a considerable body from Demerary, to come down on the 1st inst. and demand presents as their right. From the lofty tone they held, and their remarks that if refused they would procure slaves, he thought it proper to immediately order them not to attempt such a thing and to tell them they should not then receive any presents, but they must learn and be convinced that the Government would only bestow friendship as their good

behaviour merited, and which they would know from the reports of their Protectors. He had also directed the Post-holders not to allow more than six Indian men to come to Georgetown at one time without a passport. This appeared to him prudent, not only from the immoderate and useless expense of a considerable number of these idle people being daily victualled by the colony (exclusive of annual presents) : but it became necessary to counteract the false notions they had conceived or got from designing persons, that their peremptory demands could not be refused. They would now be thankful for any kindness, and sensible of the generosity voluntarily shown to them. They would also be happy to serve when necessary for the pay or presents which they before considered as their right, without any equivalent.

The Court went with the Governor in his projects and confirmed the abolition of the Keisheers, expressing also their entire satisfaction at what he had done in regard to the meetings of slaves. Whether the antagonism to any interference on the part of the British Government—which was so conspicuous later,—had not yet begun to appear, or whether CARMICHAEL by his openness and thorough honesty prevented its coming to the front, the fact remained that he carried everything before him, and succeeded in making radical alterations without the slightest objection on the part of the Court. From the above, which are only extracts from one of his speeches,—it will be seen that there was a determination on his part to reform the colony, and especially to bring the British element to the front.

The war with France continued up to the present, but the people of the West Indies became so accustomed to it that war freights and insurances were matters of course. Now came another war which could not be taken so easily—that with the United States. CARMICHAEL, on the 8th of September 1812, called attention to the state of the Militia in the then critical situation of the colony, not only on account

of the American war, but also from the troubles in the neighbouring Spanish colonies, and demanded that it should be placed on the most efficient footing to guard against external as well as internal enemies. He proposed several alternations, among the rest that the Militia of the Coasts should be mounted so as to assemble quickly at any given point. The Court thanked the Governor, declared their unanimous resolve to support him, and expressed unqualified approbation of the measures proposed.

In his address to the Court on the 20th of October, he stated that the vessel with the Indian supplies had been captured by an American privateer, which caused some difficulty with a Chief who had come down with 300 men to get his presents. The enemy's vessels had blockaded the river from the 27th to the 30th September, and seeing with deep concern the insults and depredations committed along the coast, and fearing that a mail packet and other valuable vessels might fall into their hands, he had joyfully accepted the offers of some gentlemen to go out and attack the enemy, which they did in three small vessels, manned with sailors and about sixty of the Demerara Militia. He had the most heartfelt gratification in making known the spirit and gallantry of the Militia, who made the arrogant foe fly with precipitation, leaving behind part of their spoils. Another attack was made on the privateers a little later which drove them away as far as the blockade was concerned, for which he again thanked the Militia. On the 21st of January, 1813, the Governor said he was very anxious on account of the exposed position of the coast and had established a system of signals.

One of the privateers referred to was the *Scurvy Jack*, and on the 20th of October, 1812, DANIEL BROADHEAD petitioned the Court to stay certain legal proceedings against him. He stated that when that American vessel was off the river she had captured his boat and a load of sugar, which

had been shipped to pay a debt for which he was then being sued. The Court however said they could take no cognizance of the matter. The absence of a man-of-war, CARMICHAEL said, was caused by accident and the sudden emergency of the American war, and not from any neglect of the Admiral. In February, 1813, H.M.S. *Peacock* was sent to protect the coast, where she arrived on the 15th. A few days later, the sloop of war *Espiègle*\* came from Europe, but wanting repairs was unfit for immediate service. On the 23rd of February, the *Peacock*, in cruising along the east coast, met the American privateer *Hornet*, and after a gallant struggle off Courabanna Point, the English vessel sunk with nearly all her crew. Captain PEAKE had been killed during the fight, and when the news was brought by four sailors who managed to escape, the story cast a gloom over the whole colony. A funeral sermon was preached by the Revd. W. G. STRAGHAN and the Governor writing to that clergyman to excuse his non-attendance, said the amiable character of Captain PEAKE had caused his loss to be felt as an universal affliction to the community. The professional abilities and intrepid soul that inspired him, manifestly displayed itself at the last moment of his existence, whilst in the unequal and bloody contest he was shewing and leading on his dauntless crew to glory. The enemy, had she not been attacked by that vessel, was calculated to do much mischief and renew scenes of plunder that had before been experienced.

CARMICHAEL did not enjoy good health, but nevertheless his energy was unremitting. On the 4th of March 1813 he was too unwell to attend the meeting of the Court of Policy, but sent an address; on the 30th of April he was out again but did not give any long speech; and after that he was laid up until the 11th of May, when he died. In

\* Lieutenant (afterwards the well-known Capt.) Marrayatt was one of the officers on board this vessel.

an obituary notice the *Gazette* said, the death of any individual was a most melancholy announcement, but it was more particularly so when he who had departed was placed in an exalted situation and had displayed characteristics equally exalted. A martyr to his zeal for the welfare of the community "our Acting Governor is no more. A soldier from his cradle, long has been the time spent in the service of his King and country and many are the services he rendered them. In respect to his administration here we decline any investigation of its merits or demerits. Perfection can never be synonymous with mortality, so if there are some who have discovered errors in any of his acts of government, others may be found perhaps who think that his name deserves a distinguished seat in the memory and affections of Demerary."

Probably no Governor before or since, made so many friends and enemies during such a short period as CAEMICHAEL. A strict disciplinarian with strong opinions, he naturally roused antagonism, yet at the same time he was so candid that everyone knew what to expect. An honest man had no fear of the most searching investigation, but unfortunately there were few such in Demerara at this time. However, the Governor gave them fair warning, perhaps telling an official at his dinner table that he intended to investigate the department of which his guest was the head. WATERTON describes the case of one who became so frightened at hearing such an intimation that he ran away into the bush, and only returned when he found nothing had been discovered.

In re-establishing the College of Keisheers on its old footing at the union with Berbice, a slur was cast on his memory, which was hardly deserved. It is true that in making the alteration he acted without authority, but as the British Government allowed it to be retained for nineteen years, it was going rather far to state in the Proclamation

of July 1831, that not only was the change unauthorised, but that notice of it had not been transmitted to be laid before His Majesty for confirmation, and in fact it had not been confirmed or allowed. In a Despatch of the Secretary for the Colonies dated November 25th, 1812, the matter is referred to, but while blaming CARMICHAEL for acting without authority there is no hint of its being disallowed. Lord BATHURST said :—

“ His Royal Highness (*the Prince Regent*) cannot view without surprise the strong measure of dissolving the existing College of Keyzers, without authority or previous communication. The information in your despatch affords but a slight justification of the measure. His Royal Highness cannot admit that the mere fact of recommending an improper person, however it might be ground for observing the future conduct of the College, is by any means adequate reason for their dissolution, particularly as they at the same time submitted the name of Dr. MASSE, a gentleman acknowledged by all to be fit. Even if both had been ineligible, they could have been called upon in the first instance at least to submit two others. I am to signify the commands of His Royal Highness that you should on no future occasion proceed to any fundamental change in the constitution, without previous communication and receiving the opinion and direction of His Majesty's Government, especially in cases like the present, where there is no danger from delay.”

Owing to the American war, trade was very depressed at this time, so much so that the Harbour Master complained of the insufficiency of his fees for 1813. In that year he had only received 3,300 guilders from which all the expenses of his office had to be paid, and the Court of Policy granted him a sum of three thousand guilders from the Colony chest.

Colonel CODD who took over the administration on the death of CARMICHAEL was succeeded by Brigadier-General MURRAY, then acting Governor of Berbice, who arrived from that colony on the 17th of May 1812. Considerable differences of opinion in regard to the character of this gentleman arose in the course of his long administration, which lasted about eleven years, but taking him altogether he



seems to have been inclined to conciliate the various parties which continued to distract the colony. After his arrival in Demerara his friends in Berbice presented him with a sword as a testimonial of their appreciation of his administration of that colony, and he seems also to have gained the good-will of the home authorities, as a proper Commission was sent him almost immediately. The Secretary for the Colonies decided in August, that BENTINCK, who had satisfactorily explained his apparent disobedience, was to be appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Berbice, and MURRAY of Demerara and Essequibo. In writing to MURRAY on the 25th of September the Secretary told him that the animosities which had lately prevailed might for some time perhaps make his situation one of considerable difficulty, but His Royal Highness relied on his continuing to exercise that spirit of forbearance and that firmness of character which rendered his administration of Berbice so justly popular.

The disputes between FRANKLAND and VAN BERCKEL ended in the dismissal of both, and as the necessity for a legal gentleman as President of the Court of Justice was still felt, this office was filled by the appointment of JABEZ HENRY, who, the Colonial Secretary said, would be a most able and judicious assistant to the Governor, at the same time stating that the zeal with which HENRY had applied himself to reform abuses and to improve the general practice of the Court could not fail in producing the most important advantages. In May 1814 he told MURRAY that it afforded H. R. H. much satisfaction to observe the perfect cordiality between Mr. HENRY and himself, and the earnest desire he had manifested to support the President in those difficulties he might bring on himself by the continuance of his active, able and impartial administration of justice.

Many of the difficulties in the Court of Justice were caused by VAN BERCKEL, who was undoubtedly a very

eminent lawyer and thoroughly acquainted with the practice of the Dutch Courts, in which naturally HENRY could hardly have been his equal. The Governor was told to warn VAN BERCKEL privately, that although his talents entitled him to much consideration, yet that His Majesty's Government could not allow him to put himself in opposition to the President, or employ his talents to thwart the objects and impede the ends of justice, and should his future conduct be of that description they would have no hesitation in adopting such measures as might effectually secure the President from a repetition of it.

In 1814, considerable anxiety and even alarm was felt in the colony at the progress of events in Europe. NAPOLEON was on his last legs, and the Governor was informed in February that the change in relations between England and the United Provinces rendered it unadvisable to adopt any important measure until it was decided to which power the colony was henceforth to belong. The measures adopted by CARMICHAEL as well as the natural course of things had tended to make Demerara more and more English, while the remembrance of the short but trying period after the peace of Amiens, and the contradictory reports then circulating, tended to make the British inhabitants doubly anxious as to what would now happen. This may be seen in the following extract from the *Gazette* of April 15th 1815:—"What a delightful life of uncertainty we again enjoy! At first, with commendable resignation we made up our minds to become Dutch in consequence of the restoration of these realms, and all that therein is—then again to continue in our present state of "betweenity," the scale somewhat preponderating in favour of being British! After that we thought it right to recommend the importation of Scandinavian dictionaries, and, for the purpose of understanding them, a more intimate acquaintance with the northern lights."

On the 22nd of July 1815 however the news arrived that the treaties with Holland had been laid before Parliament, and that Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice were ceded to Great Britain. Thus at last, said the *Gazette*,—no doubt with a feeling of relief—“ they have condescended to inform us to whom we belong.”

The Convention between Great Britain and the Netherlands was signed on the 13th of August 1814. By the first article, all the Dutch colonies were to be restored except the Cape of Good Hope, Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice, in consideration for which cessions the ninth article provided that Great Britain should pay a million sterling to Sweden an account of her claims on Holland and two millions towards augmenting and improving the defences of the low countries. The Dutch proprietors in the ceded colonies were to be allowed to trade with Holland under certain regulations which were embodied in another Convention signed August 12th 1815. By these the trade was allowed to be carried on in Dutch ships for five years from the 18th of January 1816, and Dutch proprietors might enjoy full liberty in going and returning as well as in managing their estates. Arrangements were also made to prevent summary execution by Dutch mortgagees who might under the circumstances be inclined to foreclose, while Dutch proprietors could export their produce to the Netherlands and in return import necessaries, all persons claiming these privileges to be registered within three months after publication of the convention in the colony. It was also agreed that as the *Societat van de Berbice* had a just claim to their four plantations they should be restored within six months, in full satisfaction for all claims which the Company might have on His Britannic Majesty.

Thus the three rivers were finally ceded to Great Britain, the French and American wars terminated, and all obstructions to progress removed. The Governor was told on the

18th December that as the protracted warfare had occasioned frequent relaxations of the Colonial Policy, now that peace had arrived it was necessary to strictly enforce the regulations, therefore he must prohibit all intercourse with foreign colonies, except in cases of necessity and very great emergency.

622  
 The produce shipped from Demerara and Essequibo in 1814 amounted to 31,336,906 lbs. sugar, 1,701,499 glns. rum, 8,328,511 lbs. coffee and 6,018,437 lbs cotton. By this time cotton had seen its best days and was about to be replaced by sugar. During the next few years the coast plantations were in many cases abandoned or given over to the grazing of cattle, their slaves being removed to carry on sugar cultivation, which required more labour. As there was no possibility of increasing the number of labourers, it necessarily followed that turning a cotton or coffee estate into a sugar plantation meant the abandonment of at least half the acreage in cultivation.

The Marquis of LANSDOWNE speaking of these colonies in 1816, in the House of Lords, said he was curious to know how ingenuity could prove that their acquisition was from any point of view desirable. What benefit could result, except to the individuals appointed to official situations, he could not conjecture. Their acquisition was a little extraordinary ; first a costly expedition was sent to take them, then they were restored, taken again, and finally three millions were paid to Holland as purchase money for them. He thought it would have been far wiser for England to have paid the same sum to get rid of them, since they only produced sugar they could not consume, and withdrew capital they could not afford. As to the laws and regulations of the colonies, he said, they should emanate from the British Parliament and not be left to local legislatures.

President HENBY did not succeed in mollifying the conservative party in the Court of Justice, but rather exasper-

ated them by his attempts to alter and improve the administration of the law. During the period when so much uncertainty existed as to the ultimate disposal of the colony, the Dutch naturally resented all innovations, going so far as to write anonymous and threatening letters to the President. In 1814 MURRAY appears to have had a disagreement with him on account of a decision in regard to Dutch mortgages. This resulted in a strong despatch from the home government, telling the Governor that his opinion of Mr. HENRY's conduct was erroneous and that the general tone of his correspondence with that gentleman was regrettable, as it tended to disturb the harmony which ought to subsist, and prevented cordial co-operation. Extensive as were the powers delegated to him they nevertheless did not extend to a control over the judicial proceedings of the colony, and every interference could not fail to be productive of discontent if not of more serious evil.

The Governor does not seem to have taken much notice of this caution and President HENRY, finding himself in a disagreeable position, resigned in 1816, and was succeeded by Mr. SERGEANT ROUGH. This gentleman was almost as obstinate as the Governor and the result was that the civil and judicial administrations were continually at loggerheads. Both Governor and President were arbitrary, and in the first year or two appear to have combined together; later MURRAY seems to have aided and abetted in a stubborn opposition against ROUGH. How the Court of Justice worked at this time may be seen from the case of *Ross versus MURRAY*.

In 1819 GEORGE ROSS, who was Comptroller of Customs, Receiver of Colonial Duties, Deputy Post-Master, and a private banker, partly discounted some bills on London drawn by MILLIKIN CRAIG on J. J. L. MOLIBEE, but before they became due and the balance was paid the parties had a dispute. On account of this CRAIG gave notice of his

intention to stop the bills in London and attached the estate which was the consideration for them. The Court of Justice however ordered the attachment to be taken off, on which CRAIG appealed to the Privy Council. MOLIERE then insisted that ROSS should pay him the balance of about £5,000 due on the bills, which ROSS agreed to do if MOLIERE would guarantee that the bills would be paid in London. This of course he could not do and therefore ROSS refused to pay, on which MOLIERE went to the Court of Justice and got a mandament ordering the amount to be paid. ROSS then wished to appeal to the Privy Council, but Governor MURRAY refused to allow this. As the Marshall could find no money to seize on the mandament, a writ of strict Gyzeling (civil imprisonment) was issued to compel ROSS to pay, and his house was surrounded for two months by the police, who were relieved at intervals, thus keeping him as a prisoner. At length, assisted by a Schout and four dienaars armed with cutlasses and accompanied by a blacksmith with a sledge-hammer, the police broke open the house and then the door of ROSS's room and took him to jail, where he was confined with slaves, felons and runaway negroes for over four months. He petitioned the Governor to be allowed to deposit the amount in question pending an appeal, but this was peremptorily refused, on which he was compelled to pay the whole, together with the costs, amounting to about £7,000, which he did under protest. While he was in jail the books of his office of Receiver were overhauled and stated to be incorrect, while, without giving him an opportunity of defending himself, he was dismissed from that post as well as all his other offices, his successor being apparently a protege of the Governor and already Secretary and Ordinance Store-keeper, in virtue of which offices ROSS said he was precluded from holding the others. ROSS requested to be heard in his defence and to have access to his books, but the Governor would not allow this, while at the private

investigation which took place he was even refused permission to be present. All these arbitrary proceedings Ross declared in his memorial to the Privy Council were most illegal, oppressive and tyrannical, and on these grounds he demanded an enquiry into the Governor's conduct.

In October 1821 President ROUGH was suspended by the Governor and this led to another appeal to the Privy Council, ROUGH *versus* MURRAY. ROUGH complained of illegal and unwarrantable outrages, and that without delinquency, charge, or a shadow of legal or moral guilt, he had been suspended, with every aggravation that such a proceeding could have been accompanied. His library, books and papers, had been seized, his secretary turned out, his suspension blazoned forth, his place filled by an appointment most illegal and improper, and a mock procession of his enemies held to celebrate their triumph, encouraged by the Governor.

It appears that the fees of the Court of Justice were so very high that the matter was agitated throughout the colony with a view to their reduction. The *Gazette* said very little, but the *Chronicle*, then the property of ALEXANDER STEVENSON, was very violent, charging the President with extortion and subverting the laws "in the most arbitrary manner, for purposes which any honest man or upright judge would be ashamed to own." ROUGH charged the Governor with aiding and abetting in these libels, which appeared in the form of letters, and even of having some of them submitted to him before publication. The press, as ROUGH said, was entirely within the Governor's control and he could have suspended the *Chronicle* at any time, but instead of doing this, when the proprietor was prosecuted for libel his Counsel pleaded that far from disturbing the peace of the government, STEVENSON was in fact its agent, inasmuch as he was fulfilling the will and pleasure of the Governor. ROUGH claimed that he was within his

rights in keeping to the old scale of fees, and charged MURRAY with misgovernment, oppression and conspiracy, with totally surrendering the Court of Justice to the licentious falsehoods of the press, and with neglecting to use means for the discovery of the writers of anonymous letters.

There can be no doubt that the President was very unpopular, while the Governor in his defence said that ROUGH himself refused to try a person for libel, on some trivial excuse, thus closing the door on such prosecutions. His effigy was chalked on the walls as hanging on a gallows and the procession of which he complained was advertised on the 13th of October 1821, by placards, which stated that "Cockades for the Cavaliers" who intended to join the procession that evening were to be had gratis from J. L. FORRESTER, Secretary. The party held their meetings, which they called Radical Hall, at Mr. HEATHERLY'S house in Georgetown or at *Belair*, the Governor's name being openly mentioned as countenancing them. The procession paraded Main St. and the Brick Dam between seven and eight in the evening and consisted of a cavalcade of negroes from *Belair* headed by A. C. JOHNSTONE on a white horse and followed by an illuminated car. Mr. JOHNSTONE'S white horse was an emblem of purity, while he carried a palm branch as a sign of victory over the President. In the car were Messrs. TONGE and RIBEY with a transparency of "Justice revived" on one side, and on the other an effigy of ROUGH, intended to be burnt before the Presidency, which however the Fiscal prevented. They paraded in front of ROUGH'S house, and then went on to the Governor's, where they sang songs, and made complimentary speeches, apparently without any objection being made, thence going to the Acting President DE GROOT and giving him an ovation. A few rows took place, in the course of which some windows were broken and a few persons slightly injured.



The Privy Council gave their decision on the case in 1825, saying that the Governor was not justified in his conduct, and reprehensible in not taking measures to prevent the procession, which was so evidently designed as an insult to ROUGH. At the same time the President had been indiscreet and the Governor remiss in not maintaining proper respect for the judicial character and authority of ROUGH, and not endeavouring to protect him from a series of libellous calumnies. In their opinion the disputes had arisen from the undefined nature of their respective authorities and the want of a table of fees, concerning which there was a discordance of opinion.

In December 1821, a new President, CHARLES WRAY arrived, who put matters on a better footing and seems to have got on very well with the Governor. The Court of Justice however continued to be a grievance to the British inhabitants and remaining so until reformed. Mr. HENRY, the former President, writing in 1821, said that an Englishman by merely placing his foot in a Dutch colony for mercantile purposes, might find to his great surprise that he had lost his birthright of a trial by jury, and would be exposed in a place subject to his natural sovereign, to an inquisitorial process conducted according to the forms of the sixteenth century (with the exception only of the torture) and conducted by a foreign lawyer, under the authority of a code the language of which, being old Dutch, he could not be expected to understand.

Duels were still frequent, but the newspapers spoke of them in more guarded terms than formerly. In March 1817, two gentlemen quarrelled at an evening party, the result being that Mr. A. HEWLINGS, an Attorney-at-Law, was killed. The name of the victor was carefully suppressed, but it appears that he was the aggressor, having threatened to wring HEWLINGS' nose for something he had said. On this HEWLINGS said, "you dare not," to which

the other replied, "you scoundrel I will show you what I dare do," following up the words with a blow. HEWLINGS, being weaker than his antagonist, unsuccessfully attempted to defend himself, but a fight was prevented by the interference of others of the party. The anonymous gentleman then said to HEWLINGS "This is a fine moon-light night, and if you have the courage to meet me, be here in the course of half an hour, and you will find me ready at that house," pointing to one near by. HEWLINGS replied, "never fear, I don't believe I shall see you again to-night, you cowardly scoundrel." Both parties took their seconds and proceeded to the beach near the Block-house, where they exchanged shots without effect, but on the second firing HEWLINGS received a bullet wound which proved fatal.

Gambling and betting were common, there being many opportunities of carrying on these in connection with racing and cock-fighting, besides those naturally belonging to the local customs of the time. We find mention of race courses at *Kitty* and *Turkeyen*, while in August 1816 an association was projected for, "promoting manly amusements." These were to include racing, which they thought improved the breed of horses, boating which trained good rowers, and all other manly amusements tending to promote health, dissipate spleen, and abate scandal. The subscription was two Joes per annum, and it was decided to look out for a race course. In November following it was reported that some horses had been introduced by the Sporting Club, while the Cock Club held its first meeting in the same month. The latter existed for several years, its advertisements appearing regularly, as for example "a match of 31 cocks will be fought on the 16th and 17th of April, (1818), when a genteel provision will be made."

The influence of the Anti-Slavery party in the British Parliament was seen with alarm by the planters, who, on their side, endeavoured to procure representation of their

interests. Among those who stood up in their defence was JOSEPH MARRYATT, M.P., who wrote several pamphlets showing up the mistakes of the Berbice Commissioners and those of the negrophiles generally. At a meeting held August 13th 1816, at Marshall's Hotel, a vote of thanks was accorded and sent to that gentleman, to which he replied that he felt highly gratified that his exertions in support of the characters and interests of the West Indian Planters were appreciated. He would continue his endeavours to point out the calamitous consequences that must inevitably result to the colonies and mother country, from the African Institution being countenanced in their present system of exciting discontent and insubordination in the minds of the negroes.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### *THE EAST COAST SLAVE INSURRECTION, 1824.*

Proceedings in the British Parliament—Influence of garbled reports on the slaves—The Court of Policy called upon to give effect to the resolutions—Origin of the revolt—Joseph Packwood gives information to his master—They lay it before the Governor who proceeds to investigate the matter—The insurrection breaks out—Evidence of various persons—The Governor tries to pacify the negroes—Alarm of the people in Georgetown—Martial Law declared—Troops sent up the East Coast—Rescue of Planters by Lieutenant Brady—Skirmish at Bachelor's Adventure—Georgetown under arms—Proclamations to slaves—Arrival of more troops from Barbados—Insurrection suppressed—Trial of prisoners by Court Martial—Character of Revd. John Smith—He is arrested for complicity in the revolt—One ringleader taken and another shot—Effect of the news in England—Trial and condemnation of Smith—The King expresses his satisfaction with all concerned in suppressing the revolt—Martial Law ceases—Testimonials—Meeting of the inhabitants—They want to exclude missionaries and have established churches—Newspaper correspondence between Davies, the missionary, and Browne, the Presbyterian clergyman—Ill-feeling towards Austin and Arrindell because of their sympathy with Smith—English views of Smith's case.

**T**HE influence of the Anti-Slavery party in England had, in the year 1823, succeeded in influencing public opinion in such a manner that the Government was impelled to do something.

The Slavery question was brought up in the House of Commons on the 15th of May, by Mr. F. BUXTON, who moved "that the state of slavery is repugnant to the principles of the British Constitution and of the Christian religion, and that it ought to be abolished gradually throughout the British colonies with as much expedition

as may be found consistent with a due regard to the well-being of the parties concerned." His object was to extinguish slavery altogether by ordaining that all children born after a certain day should be free. The number of slaves was then estimated at a million ; these he would not emancipate, because they were unfit for the enjoyment of freedom, but he would mitigate the severities of their condition. They should be attached to the soil but not considered as chattels ; they should be allowed to testify in Courts of Law, the onus of proof in cases affecting their liberty should lie on the claimant ; all obstructions to manumissions should be removed ; religious instructions and marriage should be sanctioned and enforced ; Sunday should be free ; and the authority of the master restrained.

Mr. CANNING after deprecating certain portions of BUXTON'S speech wherein he had declaimed against cruelty, which CANNING said had long ceased, proceeded to refute the statement that slavery was unchristian or unconstitutional. How could slaves be divided into two classes, one to be free directly, the other left to linger on ? He agreed that it was desirable to gradually extinguish slavery, but not in the manner proposed. He would begin by abolishing the whip as far as females were concerned, give them more time for instruction, secure their rights to property, admit their evidence, and perhaps prevent their being sold apart from the estates. In this spirit he proposed three resolutions, first for ameliorating their condition, second, giving them civil rights and privileges, and third, that measures should be taken as soon as possible. After a long debate these resolutions were taken without a division.

The British Government, determined to carry out the views of the party, probably for political reasons, and acted upon these resolutions at once, the result being a despatch from Lord BATHURST dated May 24th to all the colonies in the West Indies. The main point insisted upon

was the absolute prohibition of flogging among female slaves, which however in Demerara it was thought better should come from the Court of Policy, rather than the Imperial Government. Measures must also be taken to prevent the arbitrary exercise of the whip generally, and it was recommended that this be no longer carried into the field either as an emblem of authority or for use.

To understand the feelings of the planters we must try to put ourselves in their place. Knowing, as they did, the dispositions of the negroes, and that any interference from without would necessarily tend to insubordination, and be disastrous in its effects, they naturally felt sore. It was, they thought, ignorant meddling—minding another man's business—coming between master and servant—and altogether something that could not be tolerated. Nevertheless, they felt that it would be useless to protest, as that would at once put their slaves into ill-humour and make them stubborn and unmanageable.

It is generally supposed that slaves knew nothing of what was going on in England, but such was not the case. Planters met together and talked over their crops, attended by domestics, who listened to their discussions and retailed garbled stories of what was going on. Even now-a-days it is surprising to hear the negroes' reports of what others say; how much more exaggerated therefore must these have been in their days of gross ignorance. The missionaries told them something also, in a most guarded manner, which they misunderstood, and to which they placed entirely different meanings from what was intended.

The Court of Policy saw the way things were going, and Councillor JOHN AUSTIN gave notice of motion on the 5th of May to reduce or limit the working hours of the slaves. At the next meeting, June 2nd, however, the mover declined to bring forward the matter on account of the intelligence lately received from the mother country.

A special meeting was called on the 21st of July, to consider the despatch of Lord BATHURST, when the Governor said the Court must derive considerable satisfaction at having anticipated this in some degree by its previous determination to look in the matter, which had been only suspended by intelligence received later. As the despatch was of so much importance, its consideration was postponed.

On the 4th of August it was again brought forward, the Governor remarking that the whole question was one of vital importance, not only to the slaves, but also to the colony, necessarily requiring cool and deliberate judgment. A letter from London dated May 28th and signed by thirty-two estates proprietors, including JOHN GLADSTONE, CHARLES MCGAREL, N. M. MANGET, &c., was then read. They had viewed the proceedings of the House of Commons with great anxiety, as these affected most vitally the interests of every person concerned in West Indian property, they would however recommend an active co-operation in carrying out the Instructions. They were very doubtful of the results, and would call attention to the necessity for Militia protection and a good understanding with the Indians, in case of trouble. After deliberation the Court adjourned without coming to any decision. They again met on the 6th, read the report of CANNING's speech; discussed the matter and adjourned until next day. Having then concluded the discussion the Honourable JOHN WADDELL proposed an ordinance to, first, prohibit female slaves from being flogged; second, to discontinue carrying the whip into the field, and, third, to take some measures to control female slaves. This having been passed, but without any order for publication, the matter was left over and the Court adjourned.

Meanwhile, the news of BUXTON's and CANNING's speeches had been spread throughout the colony, the negroes hear-

ing that BUXTON spoke up for emancipation and that CANNING had apparently agreed with him, thought they were now to be all freed. When however nothing came from the Governor and Court, it was generally rumoured that the King had ordered their emancipation and the planters refused to give it them.

At *Le Resouvenir* was a chapel of the London Missionary Society under the charge of the Revd. JOHN SMITH, a very pious man, but weak in body and not very strong in mind. His congregation consisted of slaves from the neighbouring plantations, including those between what are now the villages of *Plaisance* and *Beterverwagting*. Among his congregation were a number of young negroes, who having imbibed,—partly from his teaching, but mainly from talk among themselves of what they had heard surreptitiously at their masters' tables and other places—some idea of what the Anti-slavery Society was doing, were prepared to stand up for what they supposed to be their rights. Some of them had also procured tracts on the burning question, and although few could read, there were one or two who managed to get some idea of their contents. What was the general teaching of SMITH, apart from his religious services, it is hard to determine. At heart he was antagonistic to slavery, and it may be fairly presumed that this was known to his congregation, besides which the polity of the body to which he belonged was not like that of the established churches conducive to authority. He knew the slaves to be cruel and debased, believed they would become worthy men and women if educated, but like other well-meaning persons, could not see that there were two sides to that question, and that a savage, like a child, requires a strong hand in the early stages of his development.

One of the most restive spirits among the congregation was JACK GLADSTONE of *Success*, whose father QUAMINA was one of the leaders at the chapel. From JACK's defence



when on his trial, it appears that in June or July a slave named CATO told his father something about freedom having come out, which he had heard from Mr. SIMPSON's boy JOE (JOSEPH PACKWOOD). Several slaves then met together, when the story of JOE, which he had written, was read and discussed. JOE stated that he had seen in his master's papers that Mr. WILBERFORCE was doing his best for them, and that if they would wait a little a new Governor would come and give them what had been allowed. About two weeks after, JACK saw DANIEL, the Governor's servant, who was a Methodist brother, and enquired if he knew anything of the reported freedom, who replied that he had heard a little, but advised patience. YORK of *Success* also told JACK that an overseer had said they were free, only their masters would not agree to it. One Sunday Mr. HAMILTON's housekeeper had spoken to him outside Bethel Chapel saying that Mr. HAMILTON had declared they were free, but that he did not think this freedom would be granted unless all sensible persons went and demanded it by force. Being asked "what she meant by force," she said, to take away all the arms and turn the whites off the estates. On Sunday the 17th of August, a number of the more intelligent slaves from several plantations, including *Success*, *Chateau Margot*, *Nabacis*, and *Le Resouvenir*, met together on *Success* middle-walk, and concocted a plan for a general rising on all the plantations on the East Coast the following evening. They were first to take all the arms, and then confine the white people in the stocks, for fear they should carry the news to town. In the morning the whites would all be sent to town, and the negroes were then to arm themselves and await the Governor, who they expected would come and ask their reasons for so acting, meanwhile they would remain on the estates without working.

As may be seen from the above the project was more

foolish than either vindictive or cruel. That a number of half-savages would ever have been able to carry out such a project without good leaders or discipline could not have been expected, while, once restraint was thrown off, there would have been no end of quarrelling and fighting among themselves.

On Monday morning, the 18th of August, between six and seven o'clock, JOSEPH PACKWOOD, a mulatto slave belonging to Mr. SIMPSON of *Le Reduit* (now *Ogle*) went to his master, who had not yet risen, and with some trepidation and alarm, told him the negroes on the Coast were all about to rise that evening. JOSEPH, not being one of the conspirators, had set a negro to find out the meaning of certain suspicious movements on the part of the slaves, with the result that he was able to give information of the conspiracy to seize and confine all the white people.

Desiring his servant to avoid any appearance of alarm, Mr. SIMPSON, who was a Burgher officer and Captain of the Georgetown Cavalry, set off for town, first calling on Mr. MEWBURN of *Cummings Lodge*, who accompanied him. Arriving about ten o'clock they went at once to Governor MURRAY, then residing at Camp House, who immediately asked Captain SIMPSON to call out the Cavalry, which was done at once, several persons having to leave their seats in the Court of Justice to join their corps. These, to the number of only fourteen men, were ordered by the Governor to proceed to *Le Reduit*, calling at all the plantations on the way to give warning, while he would follow them, which he did soon after in a carriage, attended by the Fiscal and several other gentlemen. The Cavalry arrived at *Le Reduit* at about four o'clock, and the Governor an hour later when information was at once sent to the estates up the Coast as far as Mahaica.

The Governor and the Fiscal then held an investigation, several negroes being interrogated quietly as to their know-

ledge of the affair, and arrested to prevent the news spreading that the plot was discovered. After the examination the Governor went with the Cavalry to *Vryheid's Lust* where a negro named MARS was arrested, after which an express was sent to *Felicity* to ask Captain McTURK to meet the Governor at *Vryheid's Lust*.

That gallant Captain had been dressing about four o'clock when a coloured man called and asked him whether he had heard of the expected rebellion, and mentioned CATO of his estate as one of the leaders. On this CATO was called and denied everything, but McTURK refusing to believe him, sent him off to Pln. *Brothers* to be clapped in the stocks and then sent to the Manager of *Success* ordering QUAMINA and JACK to be arrested.

To his message however he received no answer and then began to fear the worst. He at once called out the Militia of his division, and on proceeding to the rendezvous he met the express from the Governor and soon joined the party.

In the course of the interview, a fire was perceived and Captain SIMPSON and four Cavalry went off at once to ascertain the cause. The Governor and the rest of the party followed, and on arriving at the side-line between *Le Resouvenir* and *Felicity*, a large body of armed negroes came down upon them shouting "We have them! We have them!" The Governor stopped and asked what they wanted, to which they answered "Our right." They were asked to lay down their arms, when they would be patiently listened to, but they positively refused at first, two or three afterwards on expostulation doing so. The Governor then told them what were the intentions of the Government with regard to the amelioration of their condition, and at the same time warned them that any acts of insubordination or breaches of the peace would deprive them of these benefits. For their own good, he advised them to

return peaceably to their homes, and he would be glad to meet them and give full explanations on *Felicity* at eight o'clock in the morning. There was a little hesitation, the party being undecided, some calling out No! No! and blowing shells, the others telling the Governor to go away, which he, seeing that nothing could be done with them, did after a few more unsuccessful attempts to bring them to reason, and after one of the negroes had fired at him.

A letter from Demerara published in the *Liverpool Advertiser*, and probably written by THOS. MEWBURN, shows how anxiously Monday evening was spent :—

“ We all loaded our arms and used every possible precaution to prevent a surprise. The moon shone beautifully bright after sunset, and all was profoundly tranquil at seven o'clock. I rode over some plantations to learn the dispositions of the negroes, and things seemed so quiet that I expected their intention had been abandoned, but we were convinced to the contrary about eight o'clock, when a signal fire was seen about eight miles from us, which was accompanied and followed by the blowing of shells and shouts that filled the air. The country for fifteen miles was in one hour in possession of the rebels—the white population, male and female, confined and insulted, but not murdered; that I suppose was reserved to crown the triumph.”

Mr. JAMES KEANE, manager of *Mon Repos*, stated at the trial of JACK, that an assembly of negroes took place before his house on Monday evening. There were four overseers with him and they had six or eight stand of arms, a case of pistols, and plenty of ammunition, with which they determined to defend the house from the gallery. He sent two house negroes to enquire what the mob wanted, but they refused to answer, only saying they would work no more and wanted the manager to come out on the dam. He warned them not to attack the house, on which some defied him and called on him to shoot, which he was unwilling to do unless attacked. He sent a messenger to Mr. COET but the negroes turned him back. The mob then surrounded the house and got under it, some coming up to the landing. Four shots were then fired by the negroes, to which he and

his overseers replied. This kept them back a little and the plucky whites were able to hold their own until morning when the military arrived to their relief.

Mr. LOWRIE, manager of *Good Hope*, stated at the trial of HARRY, that at half past seven a gang of negroes came before the house and wanted him to come out, but he refused and threatened to fire on them. The mob surrounded the house and threw fire-sticks into it, threatening to burn it down if he did not give up his arms. The domestics threw out the fire-brands as fast as they were thrown in. HARRY called out "open the store-door and set fire to a puncheon of rum." The same man then came to the front steps, brandishing a cutlass tied to a pole which he attempted to thrust into the manager's body, but did not succeed, it only piercing the sleeve of a house negro, just grazing his arm. HARRY then went to the back door, got into the gallery on that side, and so through the lobby to where Mr. LOWRIE was standing. Bringing his lance to the charge he called out "I don't care a d—, I am a man!" The mob then charged, overpowered the manager and put him in the stocks.

Mr. WALBROND of *Nabaclis*, at the trial of MURPHY, stated that about half past nine, when going to bed, Mr. GAINSFORT of *Golden Grove* came riding with a letter giving information of the intended rising. He determined to defend the place, there being two overseers and another white man besides himself. About four in the morning they heard a most dreadful yell, like a war-whoop. One of the overseers fired and immediately fell down calling out, 'O Christ, I am shot'. The other overseer was then shot in the back, on which the Manager went to escape by the back steps, but was immediately dragged down into the yard. Mrs. WALBROND stated she had retired to her bedroom, (it may be presumed, not to sleep) when at four in the morning she heard guns firing and the noise of doors being broken

open. Her man servant BILLY rushed upstairs and she wanted to go out and speak to the negroes. BILLY advised her not to go, as he believed master and the two overseers were killed. She went to the window to look out and was immediately shot at and wounded in the arm. Courageously braving the mob and looking down, she saw that her husband was still alive but lying on the ground. She called out and begged them not to kill him, on which they again fired at her and wounded her in the hand. BILLY then pulled his mistress back, locked her in another room, and ran away. A little later some negroes came into the room and took her downstairs, where she saw Mr. TUCKER the overseer, dying. She asked the negroes why they had done such a thing, on which they declared that the white man had cut his own throat. She asked MURPHY to send for a doctor, but he said "No! let him die." The overseer died the following night.

WILLIAM MERCER stated, at the trial of LOUIS, that he was at *Better Hope* with the Manager, THOS. BLAKE, on the Monday evening. Receiving intimation of the intended rising they armed themselves. Between nine and ten o'clock an armed body assembled before the house, calling on the estate's negroes to join them, and on their refusal to do so, attacked them. Being driven back, one of the enemy blew a shell and rallied his men, who with reinforcements overpowered the faithful slaves. They then rushed into the house, the negro LOUIS taking the manager by the throat and dragging him out. MERCER was surrounded and chopped on the head with cutlasses, some wanted to kill him, but were prevented by others. He was put in the stocks and refused water to wash his wounds, the manager and a coloured man being also confined in the same way.

Captain SIMPSON, who it will be remembered went on before the Governor to ascertain the meaning of the fire, proceeded towards *Success*, being directed there by Mr.

CORT. Coming towards the buildings of that estate he observed several negroes armed with cutlasses commanding the entrance to the manager's house. He at once rode up to the bridge calling out, "Are there no white people there?" to which the Manager answered "Do not fire at them, they are doing no harm." Captain SIMPSON told them to come down at once, which they did, the negroes crowding round in great numbers and proceeding to surround the party, the cavalry being obliged to keep them off with their sabres. The manager's party was however rescued and got off safely.

At *Le Resouvenir*, as the Rev. JOHN SMITH and his wife were returning from a short walk at about half past six on Monday evening, they heard a great uproar near the house of the manager, Mr. HAMILTON. Proceeding there they found it besieged by forty or fifty negroes, armed with cutlasses &c. and looking very fierce. They had already forced the outer doors and filled the lower part of the house. When asked by SMITH what they wanted, they replied, "the guns and our rights." He tried to reason with them, but without effect, they being already too excited to listen to anything. However they allowed the manager to depart instead of putting him in the stocks as they intended, after securing all the arms to be found in the house.

The Governor returned to Georgetown about nine in the evening and commenced preparations for suppressing the insurrection. At daybreak next morning drums beat to arms, and the Militia, as well as almost every one else, assembled at the rendezvous, where a Proclamation was read declaring the whole colony under Martial Law. All faithful subjects were required to aid and assist to the utmost of their abilities in restoring the peace of the country and in protecting their fellow citizens; no persons were to leave Georgetown without special permission, all persons, *without distinction* capable of bearing arms were imme-

diately to enrol themselves in the Militia ; and all slaves were to be detained on the premises of their masters and owners, and not suffered to go out unless on indispensable business.

Already the town was in a panic, the news of something—they knew not what—having spread like wild fire during the night. To add to the confusion it was rumoured that the rebels were coming down to town in great force, which caused a general flight of ladies and children to the stellings, to get on board the vessels in the river. The husbands and brothers being all on duty, their families and relations rushed to the water-side, and in some cases suffered from their impetuosity in jumping from the stellings into boats alongside. All the vessels were soon filled with women and children, who remained in them for some time after the alarm was proved groundless.

The Court of Policy having been specially convened, met on Tuesday morning, when the Governor informed them of the revolt. He had gone a short way up the Coast but had been stopped. When he had explained the intentions of the Government to the negroes they had demanded unqualified freedom. Their violence to the whites made it necessary to take prompt and strong measures, and he had declared Martial Law. Captain STEWART had written to say that all the bridges beyond *Goedverwagting* had been destroyed. He was proceeding up the Coast at once and would leave them to deliberate. President WRAY proposed that the Court be considered as assembled until further notice, which was agreed to, and the Governor at once authorised to make such provision for the troops as he should think fit and proper. Meanwhile owing to the promptitude of the Governor, a detachment of the 21st Fusileers and the 1st West Indian Regiment had been ordered up the Coast at ten o'clock on Monday evening, while a contingent of the Militia patrolled the streets of



the town during the night. For greater despatch, carriages were requisitioned for the troops, who under Lieutenant PEDDIE went as far as *Le Resouvenir*, where the vehicles were stopped because the bridge had been torn down by the rebels. A temporary bridge was soon put up and the party proceeded to march up the Coast, much delayed however by other broken bridges. The night being dark, they could hardly find their way, and going to *Lusignan* for a guide about three in the morning found a party of negroes asleep on the house steps, whom they surrounded, and on their offering resistance, fired upon, with the result that two were killed and four taken prisoners. Proceeding with the guide to *Annandale* they had a slight skirmish near the house, driving off the negroes and taking possession of it.

Lieutenant BRADY of the Fusileers, was then in charge of the military post at *Mahaica*, having a force at his disposal of one sergeant and sixteen privates. He heard a rumour of the intended rising at six o'clock on Monday evening and at once sent information to the neighbouring estates, on which some of the white people took refuge at the post. Five troopers who had been sent out to warn him, after some slight opposition from bodies of negroes on the road, arrived at *Mahaica* at midnight. At about half past six on Tuesday morning, Mr. ROGERS of *Ann's Grove* arrived with the information that about two thousand of the negroes were coming to attack the post, on which the Lieutenant with his seventeen men went out to check them, releasing two white men from the stocks at *Ann's Grove* and being joined by several others. Between *Ann's Grove* and *Dochfour* they came upon about 700 of the insurgents, some of whom were well armed, who tried to surround the military, on which a brisk and continued fire began and was kept up, the Lieutenant and his men retiring in an orderly manner before overpowering numbers, until able to take refuge in the post.

The killed on the side of the negroes were about a dozen, while the whites had only four men wounded.

On Tuesday another detachment of the Fusileers and the Georgetown Militia under Lieutenant Colonel LEAHY proceeded up the Coast to *Chateau Margot*, where they were joined by Captain CROAL and twenty coloured Militia. Proceeding onward and releasing several white persons at *Better Hope* and other places, they arrived about three o'clock on Wednesday morning at *Bachelor's Adventure*, where they posted themselves in the house and about the buildings. The negroes were here in great force, several being shot by the sentries during the night. At daybreak two large bodies of about a thousand each were discovered to the right and left of the detachment, armed with cutlasses and bayonets fixed on poles, while about a hundred had guns and pistols. The Lieutenant-Colonel went out alone to parley with them, asking what they wanted. Some said two free days in the week, others three. He told them to give up their arms and he would report their wishes to the Governor, and then retired to await their decision. Nothing following, he again went to them with Captain CROAL, when they said they would be free, as the King had sent it out. LEAHY then read the Proclamation of Martial Law, and tried further persuasion, the only result being a proposal from one of them to secure him and CROAL as prisoners. He then retired, giving them half an hour to consider, at the end of which some of the leaders advanced and said they were determined to have nothing less than their freedom. "Very well" said LEAHY, "then I shall have to fire on you." The troops were now formed in order, when the officers gave the negroes a final warning to lay down their arms as they did not want to hurt them, on which one of them brandished his cutlass and told them to come on. A volley was then fired, which was returned in a fashion by the negroes, who however made a rush for

a cotton field, from whence the shooting was continued for some minutes. About a hundred of the negroes were killed, but the only casualty on the other side was one Rifleman slightly wounded. After this most of the negroes retreated, some however coming forward and laying down their arms who were secured as prisoners. The party then proceeded up the Coast to Mahaica to relieve Lieutenant BRADY, taking a number of prisoners on the way, and arrived at the post about four o'clock on Wednesday afternoon.

While this was going on, the greatest anxiety was felt in Georgetown. Every one was listening for the latest news and fears were naturally entertained that the insurrection would spread into other districts. The inhabitants generally rose to the occasion, everyone coming forward to enrol in the Militia, even foreigners, and seamen from vessels in the river, among the rest being the Methodist missionaries, who however were not required to serve. On Tuesday, besides the regular Militia, a provisional battalion of nearly six hundred men was raised, who were stationed at the Scotch Church. All the men being engaged, it naturally followed that the stores were closed, and with the exception of the patrols, no one was to be seen in the streets, the negroes being kept at home in accordance with the Proclamation. The silence was awful and impressive, the ladies on board the vessels anxious and fearful, the armed men determined to fight for their homes and lives, while the negroes crouched down in unwonted quietness. The *Gazette* came out with the Proclamation, but was reduced to half a sheet, the editor, like all the rest, having to attend to his Militia duties.

On Wednesday the 20th, a Proclamation was issued to settle the minds of the negroes who had not revolted. It stated that various measures were in contemplation by His Majesty's Government, for ameliorating the condition of

the slaves and progressively qualifying them for an extension of privileges. That part of the slave population which still continued faithful was therefore notified that any general misconduct or acts of insubordination on their part similar to those evinced by the unfortunately misguided slaves on some of the estates, could not fail to render abortive the proposed measures, which necessarily depended on their peaceable, temperate and industrious behaviour. The consequences of the misconduct of those slaves, was that they were at that moment suffering all the horrors attendant on the existence of Martial Law.

On Friday a Proclamation was issued by the Governor giving an account of the progress made in suppressing the insurrection, in which he said that great praise was due to all concerned, the result of the measures taken being that the greater number of the rebels had laid down their arms and submitted. On the same day another Proclamation was issued which stated that :—

“Whereas a disposition is stated to have manifested itself among some of the slaves, to return to their duty and allegiance, and it having been reported that many faithful slaves have been forced by the more evil-minded to join in their revolt, and still continue among them on account of apprehensions of consequences—I offer a Full and Free Pardon to all (not Ringleaders, or guilty of aggravated excesses) who deliver themselves up to any Burgher Officer or other Officer commanding parties of Troops, and lay down their arms. I do hereby order and enjoin all Slaves at present in Rebellion, to lay down their arms and return to their labour,—when such Mercy as their compliance may justify, will be extended to them. In default of which and after the expiration of forty-eight hours, as aforesaid, all such as shall be found in arms, must be dealt with as Rebels, and can place little hope in Mercy.”

On the 27th arrived a man-of-war from Barbados with troops, but by this time the insurrection had been virtually suppressed. At the meeting of the Court on the following day the Governor reported it as nearly put down, some of the worst characters among the leaders being however still at large. It would be for the Government to keep a watchful eye over the conduct of the slaves, as from all accounts

it appeared that those in town were well aware of the conspiracy. A Court Martial had been formed and was now proceeding with the trials of the prisoners taken with arms or otherwise concerned in the rebellion. He felt the highest gratification in the most ready and cheerful desire manifested by every individual to co-operate with the Government in putting down the rebellion. Some had had better opportunities of distinguishing themselves than others, but all had evinced an equal devotedness. The conduct of the Militia had been admirable. A few Indians had been sent up the Coast; the successor of MANARIWAU had also arrived in town, with a considerable body under his orders. He (the Governor) had good reasons for supposing that the conspiracy was more extensive than at first contemplated, but it broke out so suddenly and violently that they had not had time to mature their plans and act simultaneously. There was no doubt that the plot was formed and hatched at the Chapel, as those who attended it were the chief leaders of the rebels. His own servants had been implicated, and one belonging to Mrs. MEEBENS, named COLIN, had been arrested, as also a butcher named ROBERT MURRAY. The latter acknowledged to having been actively employed to communicate with the slaves in town, and prepare them for the revolt. He expressed his regret at the unavoidably heavy expense to the colony, which however was absolutely necessary for the preservation and security of property. The Governor having read the confession of the prisoner PARIS, some discussion took place as to the continuation of Martial Law, but as President WRAY and the Governor agreed that it should not be hastily recalled, no alteration was made.

Meanwhile the various detachments of troops had been scouring the East Coast, and capturing the ringleaders, some of whom were hastily examined, found guilty, and shot at once as examples to the others, while the remainder

were brought to town to be tried by Court Martial. This Court sat for the first time on Monday the 26th, under the presidency of Lieutenant-Colonel GOODMAN, Commander of the Georgetown Militia. Two prisoners, LOUIS of *Plaisance* and NATTY of *Enterprise* were tried on the first day, found guilty, sentenced and brought in procession to the Parade Ground about five in the afternoon, where after engaging in prayer they ascended the gallows with much firmness and were hanged under a discharge of cannon. The following day five more were executed, and so it went on for several days.

The *Gazette* of the 28th said that many prisoners continued to arrive, the Governor's conciliatory Proclamation however appearing to have had a good effect. The editor understood that sufficient had come out in evidence and confession, to show that the plans and arrangements of the rebels were most extensive and well made—too well indeed to admit of a doubt but that a superior order of people had laid the original foundation. "Perhaps the intriguing saints at home had a hand in it—if so, they will hear with disappointment and pain that a Superintending and just Providence has frustrated their diabolical intentions."

We must now say something about the Revd. JOHN SMITH, whose character was as much vilified on the one side as it was praised on the other. According to his account he knew nothing more of the conspiracy than the fact that the negroes were discontented, until the Monday afternoon, when a letter from JACKEY REED was brought to him. This note enclosed another from JACK GLADSTONE reminding JACKEY of their agreement of last Sunday, purporting to come from the brethren of Bethel Chapel and stating that they would begin on Monday night about seven o'clock. JACKEY disclaimed any knowledge of the agreement and wrote to tell the Parson that he had nothing to do with it. In reply SMITH wrote to JACKEY as follows :—

"I am ignorant of the affair you allude to, and your note is too late

for me to make enquiry. I learnt yesterday that some scheme was in agitation ; without asking questions on the subject, I begged them to be quiet. I trust they will ; hasty, violent or concerted measures are quite contrary to the religion we profess, and I hope you will have nothing to do with them."

At first sight this seems plain enough—the Parson counselled one of his people to have nothing to do with the conspiracy—but was this sufficient ? He admits having known something the day before, and there can be no doubt that if he had made proper enquiries the whole affair would have been disclosed and he could have gone to town and given information. Knowing the character of the negro as it is shown by his letters and journal that he did, it was his bounded duty to make the inquiries, and every honest man must consider him culpable or weak in not having done so.

This was about six o'clock on Monday evening and he now knew that something (according to his own account he knew not what) was going to happen at seven. Was he alarmed or did he go to the manager and warn him ? No, he went for a quiet walk with his wife ! On his return he used his influence to rescue Mr. HAMILTON from a turbulent mob and then went quietly home. Is it any wonder that in the presence of such facts, the authorities, and almost every intelligent man in the colony, thought he knew of the affair but had decided to take no active part in it ? His behaviour was certainly not that of a loyal citizen, nor was it even manly.

Again, where was SMITH when everyone was carried away by the desire to save the colony from ruin ? Not among the hundreds who left their homes to enrol in the Militia, but at his house quietly writing to the Missionary Society that the slaves were grievously oppressed and that they had broken out but had not attempted any outrage on persons or property. He knew that Martial Law had been declared, and had read the command that every person, *without distinction*, must enrol, and he did nothing.

On the 21st while he was quietly writing, Mr NURSE, at the head of a company of infantry, called on SMITH and asked him whether he had seen the Governor's Proclamation, to which he replied that he had a copy and had read it. Calling his attention to the order to enrol Mr. NURSE asked him why he had not done so. SMITH said his profession entitled him to legal exemption. On this NURSE said he had orders from Captain McTURK to seal up his papers, which was done, and the party left. Within an hour Captain SIMPSON arrived with a troop of cavalry and Mr. NURSE's company of infantry, and took SMITH prisoner, swearing that he was the cause of all the disturbance. They then took him to town under Military escort and lodged him in the Colony House to stand his trial for aiding and abetting in the insurrection.

The feeling that led to the arrest of SMITH may be seen from another part of the same letter in the *Liverpool Advertiser*, already referred to :—

“ It is a melancholy fact that these negroes who have little work and plenty, are the worst disposed. I have done all in my power to look into the progress of this business, and I feel certain that it has originated in an improper impression having been made among a class of Methodist negroes of considerable intelligence, by their Missionary pastors, respecting the amelioration proposed by Government. Two of these persons are apprehended, as well as another white man. Mr. WILBERFORCE's pamphlets, lately sent out were in the hands of all the leaders, and were looked upon by the insurgents as their Charter, Letters from the King, &c.”

On Sunday August 31st the provisional battalion attended Service at the Scotch Church, where they were addressed by their Commandant, Major THOS. FRANKLAND, after which the “ King's Anthem ” was played on the organ. A general order published Sept. 2nd, prohibited any punishment being inflicted on any slaves who had given themselves up, while on the 6th persons were peremptorily forbidden to give or sell rum to Indians or negroes about Georgetown. On the latter date there were about two hundred Indians in



town, who had just returned from an unsuccessful expedition to capture some of the rebel leaders, who had fled to the bush aback of the plantations. They had gone about sixteen miles, but on account of the long wet season travelling was very difficult. A thousand guilders reward was offered for information, or the apprehension of QUAMINA and JACK, on the 2nd, and on the 11th it was reported that the latter had been captured while on a visit to his wife at *Chateau Margot*. The house was surrounded at night, and in the early morning when two of the Militia knocked at the door, JACK opened it himself and was taken into custody. His father QUAMINA was shot on the 16th of September by an Indian, one of a party under Captain MCTURK, who went to scour the bush and savannahs aback of the estates. Seeing two negroes running away they were called upon to stand, but took no notice, and were on the point of escaping into the bush, when the Indian CATLOW fired and shot one dead, who proved to be QUAMINA.

The horror and anxiety of the first three days raised a feeling of animosity towards the negroes which tended to produce undue severity in dealing with the prisoners. The *Gazette* of the 4th of September stated that the Court Martial proceeded slowly, seeming to be anxious that the prisoners should have the full weight of the fact in their favour that they had acted from delusion and fear of their associates. The editor trusted however that the Court would also recollect that even delusion and fear could weigh but little in the political and moral scale, whilst the other side was so deeply laden with conspiracy, insurrection and murder.

Most of the bodies of the rebels executed were hung in chains, in some cases the heads only being stuck on poles. The Parade Ground and Fort in town were disfigured by these horrible objects, while hardly a plantation from *Plaisance* to *Mahrica* was free from one or more of them. The

*Gazette* said these were not only a monument of personal guilt, but it was to be hoped they would act as a caution against like criminality. They ought to speak thus to the whole slave population. "This is the first and always to be expected consequence of endeavouring to obtain freedom by Insurrection and Murder—whereas it can only be obtained by Obedience and Industry."

On the 17th of September the Governor informed the Court that the insurrection had been put down, and that the stringent rule of Martial Law might be modified a little. The negroes had gone back to their work, and business in Georgetown was resumed, although the Court Martial was still sitting and the melancholy processions to the Parade Ground took place occasionally.

The news arrived in England about the middle of October, and created a great deal of interest, mixed with party feeling. The *St. James's Chronicle* said the insurrection might be traced to the effect produced by the late discussion in Parliament; the *Courier* expressed unqualified approbation of the wise and spirited conduct pursued on the occasion; while the *New Times* trusted that the Missionary SMITH would not be sacrificed to the resentment of the slaveholders. The last paper seems to have taken it for granted that SMITH's case was suspicious, which is rather curious, as nothing could be known in England beyond the fact of his arrest and that of Mr. ELIOT.

Most of the negro leaders having been disposed of, the most important trial—that of SMITH—was commenced on the 18th October. The greatest care was taken to exclude all bias by appointing no one on the Court Martial who owned property or slaves in the colony, the members being mostly officers of the troops; the President was Lieut.-Col. GOODMAN, the Vendue-Master, while President WRAY, of the Court of Justice, sat as a Lieutenant-Colonel of the Militia. The prisoner being allowed a legal adviser chose Mr WILLIAM

ARRINDELL, a gentleman who afterwards became well known in the colony as Chief Justice and received the honour of Knighthood. The charges may be stated in brief as being that he stirred up discontent in the negroes, conspired to bring about the rebellion, knew of the plot on the 17th and said nothing about it, and had communication with one of the rebels after the insurrection, without making any attempt to arrest him or giving information.

The trial lasted until the 24th of November. It was stigmatised as unfair and a mockery of justice by the missionary party, but on the whole it was conducted far more decently than might have been expected in the then state of public opinion in the colony. We have seen already that there were substantial grounds for suspicion, and even admitting everything said in his defence to be true, we cannot but allow that he neglected his duty as a man and a citizen. Much was said later, of the forbearance of the rebels, so different to the behaviour of negroes in other insurrections, but it must be remembered that this revolt was nipped in the bud, and would probably, as some of the colonists said, have developed such horrors as were experienced in St. Domingo, if it had gone on a few days longer. Taking the affair as an organised strike, which some tried to make out, putting masters in the stocks, shooting managers and wounding them with cutlasses, taking possession of the plantations, and destroying the bridges, would necessitate military interference in any country. The planters felt that SMITH was at the bottom of it, and believed him to have known of the plot some time before, as he certainly might if he had enquired. All that he could say in his defence amounted to a number of statements that he did not know this, that, and the other things, which he might, could, and ought to have known.

He was found guilty, which was only to be expected, but instead of banishing him from the colony, which would

have been the proper thing to do, *he was sentenced to be hanged.* This sentence however was passed in such a manner that it was obviously not intended to be carried out. He was recommended to mercy, and nothing was allowed to be published in regard to the sentence. The *Gazette* of the 29th of November stated that the Court Martial was over, but the nature of the proceedings were such as to render it imperative on His Excellency to transmit them for His Majesty's consideration. If the affair had happened in the Southern States there would probably have been no trial at all, except before "Judge LYNCH," and it may be confidently stated that the planters of Demerara showed great forbearance at this time. It is true they talked, and that loudly, calling the missionaries very hard names, but there they stopped. The prisoner was taken back to jail, where he was treated rather better than the ordinary inmates, and where his pulmonary disorder, from which he had been suffering for some time, became worse. Here he died on the 6th of February 1824, his death being accelerated according to the missionaries by the troubles he had undergone.

The question of the guilt or innocence of SMITH, created a great deal of feeling in England, the Anti-Slavery and Missionary Societies making it an excuse for continual agitation in favour of the slaves, and of course against the planters, who were such blood-thirsty villains as had never been heard of before. The British Government however was not carried away by this claptrap, and although Governor MURRAY was superseded, it was understood before the insurrection took place that a change was impending. On the 16th of December a Proclamation was issued stating that His Majesty had approved of the measures adopted,—expressed his satisfaction at the zealous and praiseworthy conduct of the officers, both civil and military,—and deeply regretted the daring and highly criminal conduct of the

slaves. The King had also commanded it to be made known to the slaves that it was on their peaceable, temperate and industrious behaviour, and on their anxiety to avail themselves of all means calculated to improve their moral and religious condition, that the success of those measures for their benefit would necessarily depend, while an opposite line of conduct would forfeit all their claims to the liberality of the British Parliament, and deprive His Majesty's Government of the means of carrying into effect the resolutions of the House of Commons. All persons in charge of slaves were commanded to make this known, while at the same time those on the East Coast were ordered not to allow any dancing or other indulgence to those concerned in the insurrection, during the Christmas Holidays.

The opinion of the British Government may also be gleaned from the King's Speech in Parliament. He said that the amelioration of the condition of slaves was perplexed with difficulties.

“ To excite exaggerated expectations in those who are the objects of your benevolence, would be as fatal to their welfare as to that of their employers, and His Majesty assures himself you will bear in mind that in the correction of a long-standing and complicated system, in which the fortunes and safety of large classes of His Majesty's subjects are involved, that course of proceeding is alone likely to attain practical good, and to avoid aggravation of evil, in which due regard shall be paid to considerations of justice, and in which caution shall temper zeal.”

The delay in the execution of SMITH's sentence was justified by an order which arrived on the 29th of March 1824. His Majesty had been pleased to remit the sentence against JOHN SMITH and to direct that he be dismissed from the colony, and enter into recognizance under a penalty of two thousand pounds not to reside in this or any other West Indian Colony.

A Royal Proclamation was issued on the 22nd of April declaring that :—

“Whereas it has been represented to us that the slaves in some of our West Indies Colonies, and of our possessions on the continent of South America, have been erroneously led to believe that orders had been sent out by us for their emancipation, and whereas such belief has produced acts of insubordination, we do hereby declare that they will be undeserving of our protection if they fail to render due *obedience to their masters and entire submission to the laws.*”

Martial Law ceased on the 19th of January 1824. The *Gazette* said there was “general joy in town”; the red flag was taken down and the “Union” hoisted under a salute of artillery and a *feu de joie* from the troops and Militia. “None could look back without the strongest feelings, at the melancholy events which caused so sudden a transition from a commercial town to a garrison.”

General congratulation of each other, praise and thanks to every one concerned in suppressing the insurrection, and addresses and testimonials were now the order of the day. On the 28th of November 1823, the Court doubled the usual allowance of the Military for as long as Martial Law continued, the only dissentient being Mr. CRAMER, who could not see why they should be paid extra for doing their duty when so many burdens would come on the colony. Before the 21st Fusileers left on the 21st of January a deputation waited on Lieutenant Colonel LEAHY and read an address expressing the high sense of gratitude of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Coast for his able and meritorious exertions. His promptitude and decision, it said, had averted a like calamity from their district, and they requested him to accept a piece of plate value three hundred and fifty guineas, with fervent wishes for his health, prosperity and happiness. Lieutenant BRADY also received an address from the planters of the East Coast with the sum of a thousand guineas as an acknowledgement of his services at Mahaica. Lieutenant YOUNG was presented with a similar

address and one hundred pounds to buy a piece of plate.

A General Order was published on the 20th of January giving praise and thanks to the officers and men of the Militia generally, while on the same day it was reported that the thanks of the Court of Policy had been given to Lieutenant Colonel LEAHY, with five hundred guineas to purchase plate for the regimental mess, and two hundred guineas for a sword. Captain STEWART of the 18th West India Regiment was also thanked and presented with two hundred guineas for mess plate, and fifty for a sword. Lieutenant Colonel GOODMAN received from the inhabitants a hundred pounds for a sword and four hundred for plate; President WRAY an address; Major SIMPSON a piece of plate worth five hundred guineas; and Major BEAN a hundred guineas for a sword. A "Friend to Merit" in the *Gazette* proposed that a medal should be struck and presented to every one who was in actual service, but this does not appear to have been carried out.

Major-General Sir BENJAMIN D'URBAN arrived to supersede Governor MURRAY on the 24th of April, before which, on the 15th, a deputation waited on the latter with an address signed by two hundred and fifty persons. They had received with much regret the announcement of his recall, and could have wished that the opportunity of thanking him had been deferred to a more auspicious period for the Colonial interests. In memory of the happy suppression of the late revolt, and as a token of their thanks for the able manner in which he had met the perilous circumstances of the times, they requested him to accept a Service of Plate value twelve hundred guineas.

Before the arrival of D'URBAN, Governor MURRAY granted permission for a Public Meeting to consider the state of affairs, which was held on the 28th of February at the Royal Hotel, the Honourable JAMES JOHNSTONE being in the

Chair. The Chairman said that the recent melancholy occurrences, the embarrassed situation of the colony, and the dangers impending over it, imperatively demanded a public expression of the feelings and opinions of its inhabitants, and imposed on them the sad necessity of discussing topics which they were all aware could not be agitated here without hazard to the peace and tranquillity of the country. A long string of resolutions was then read and agreed to with hardly a dissenting voice.

The inhabitants, it was stated, had scarcely recovered from their first feelings of alarm and dismay created by the discussion in Parliament and the proceedings of the British Government respecting the slaves, when an awful illustration of the tendency of such discussions burst upon them and they were suddenly called upon to arm themselves in defence of their rights and properties.

The meeting appealed to authenticated detail and record of the late events to prove the daring and atrocious character of the revolt, which it appeared had for its objects, not only the attainment by force of supposed privileges and immunities, but also the destruction and expulsion of the white inhabitants, the seizure of their property, and eventually the throwing off all restraints of law and government.

It was established by most unquestionable proof that reports circulated among the slaves, of the discussion in the mother country, were the immediate cause of the insurrection, while it had been equally demonstrated that the effects of such reports were greatly accelerated by the pernicious predisposition occasioned by missionary instruction and influence, more particularly by the labours of one individual, whose discourses and studious perversion of portions of the Sacred Writings, as well as his example of opposition to the constituted authorities, created feelings of discontent in the negroes, and impressed them with the belief that rights and privileges incompatible with the existence of the



Colonial System were unjustly and unlawfully withheld from them.

The colony had a just claim to indemnification for its severe losses, which were proved to have originated from the discussions of Parliament, and the meeting deemed it necessary to petition the Governor and Court of Policy and urge this well grounded claim in the most earnest and forcible manner.

Local circumstances aggravated greatly the dangers of revolt and insubordination of the negroes. The dams and sluices required constant attention, and were kept in order at a heavy expense and by a system of combined and skilfully directed labour, the interruption of which during any protracted period of disturbance would, by causing the soil itself in a great manner to disappear, inevitably occasion the total destruction of property, and expose the inhabitants of all classes to the horrors of famine.

It was a subject of deep regret that His Majesty's Ministers had suffered themselves to be surprised by the intemperate clamour of a faction in England, hostile to the existence of the Colonies, and unacquainted with the character, habits and actual condition of their inhabitants, into a deviation from that cautious, deliberate and upright policy, to which it had hitherto been the distinguishing characteristic of the British Government to adhere on every project affecting the sacred rights of property; and it was an appalling reflection that—on so momentous a subject, affecting those rights to the extent of many millions, and involving the consideration of the most delicate and difficult questions of civil economy in regard to a class in the first stages of civilization, and removed by thousands of miles from the observation of these speculative experimentalists, who deemed themselves equal to the tasks of framing regulations for their government—any decision should have been come to without full and accurate infor-

mation having been first obtained by fair, deliberate and impartial enquiry in the colony.

The inviolability of private property was a principle which had until then been held sacred by the British nation and government, and was the chief foundation of the wealth and power she had acquired, and the character for probity and public justice which she had hitherto maintained among the nations of the world. They solemnly protested against the direct or indirect infringement of that fundamental principle in reference to their property, which they possessed by rights as legal and as fully acknowledged as those of their fellow subjects of great Britain, and if the defences of law were suffered to be impaired or broken down in one instance, Public Faith would be at an end, and the tenure of all property at the mercy of the constant innovations which real or pretended views of expediency and reform might dictate. They earnestly called upon the British Government to pause before they exhibited to the world the flagrant spectacle of a nation, first creating, protecting, encouraging the formation of, and actually selling and taking payment for the Colonial property now threatened with proscription—thus inducing one portion of its subjects to invest their capital and devote their industry to its acquisition, and identify their worldly prospects and existence with its prosperity—and then under altered views of policy, and influenced by speculative ideas of expediency, proceeding to destroy what itself created—without enquiry to justify the necessity of the change, and without compensation to those, whom having first seduced by the guarantee of its laws, it then doomed to be exclusively the unrequited victims of its policy.

Under their strong sense of the injustice, and the inevitably ruinous tendency of this course, they earnestly demanded and insisted that full and ample compensation should be *first* provided, before measures calculated to im-

pair, depreciate, and destroy their property should be attempted. In like manner they protested against and reprobated in the strongest manner that insidious system of virtual spoliation and persecution, which while it kept compensation out of view and deceitfully professed to abstain from any direct and flagrant violation of their vested rights by an immediate legislative emancipation, was not the less certainly calculated to entail on them the ruinous consequences of that catastrophe, hurried on by the inevitable tendency of the contemplated projects experimentally tampering with the management of the labouring classes, and of which the immediate effects had been to waste their resources, to destroy their credit, to produce a ruinous depreciation of their property, to spread alarm and dismay, to engender distrust and alienation where mutual confidence subsisted, and for the present to blight and wither that powerful but delicate feeling of mutual dependence and attachment which united the master and slaves, and which, as it was the firmest basis of their security, was the fairest and most promising source of substantial benefit and improvement to the slave.

Of the extent and nature of the property thus put in jeopardy in this colony alone, an estimate might be formed from the fact that in the year ending January 5th 1823, there were cleared at the Custom House, 74,317 tons of shipping, navigated by 3,910 men, and that the colony yielded to the mother country in excise and customs duties on its produce, upwards of one million sterling. The peculiar wants of the colony were also a never failing source of profitable trade to the British Provinces in America—and an idea of the extent of the trade might be formed from the importations of fish and lumber annually from those provinces, these being upwards of four and a half million feet of deal lumber, nearly seventy thousand quintals of fish, upwards of a million staves, nearly a million and a half

of shingles, and upwards of seven thousand barrels of flour.

They were convinced that the most enlightened views of their own interests combined with the strongest obligations of duty to urge their adopting every practicable and prudent plan of amelioration, and they protested against the injurious and unfounded assumption that any external and distant body of merely speculative philanthropists, could have so powerful a motive or a more ardent desire than they had to promote the happiness and improve the condition of their labouring classes, with whose prosperity they felt their own indissolubly connected.

It was self-evident that no scheme for the improvement of the habits and characters of the great mass of the colonial population could be successful which did not carry with it the full conviction of the inhabitants of the colony, as to its efficacy and practicability, by whose zealous co-operation and superintendence alone any salutary change could be induced. But it was the decided conviction of the meeting, founded on long experience and an intimate knowledge of the characters, habits, and capabilities of the slave population that the interference and innovations now attempted were incompatible with the safety of the colonies, the rights of private property, and the well-being of the slaves themselves. If however the British nation, deaf to the warnings and reclamations which their experience suggested, deemed the attainment of the object it so evidently wished compatible with the great paramount considerations which it professed to have in view, of preservation of property and the true happiness and prosperity of the slaves themselves, it could have the less hesitation in adopting the course which justice prescribed, of taking possession of all their property and paying them at the same time its real value.

It was only by the gradual and spontaneous concession by the colonists themselves, of privileges, immunities and

indulgences, corresponding with the progressive intellectual and moral advancement of the slaves, and their increasing capabilities of deriving benefit from such concessions, that any permanent improvement could be effected in their condition, and the interference of actual power and authority, so far from being likely to contribute to this desirable end, by producing impatient excitement, irritation and discontent—a state the most unfavourable to moral improvement and progressive civilization—would be the surest means of defeating it. The meeting confidently challenged the most rigid investigation as to their treatment of their slaves, and referred to the records of the trials of the insurgents at the late rebellion to prove that in no solitary instance, privation of comforts, excessive work, or ill-treatment of any kind were alleged or pleaded as a ground or justification of their attempts. The colonists had the satisfaction to know that their endeavours to increase the comforts and improve the habits and character of their labouring classes had been attended with every success which the nature of their circumstances would admit, and the public feeling in the colony for years past on this momentous subject afforded the best guarantee for a continuance of the same humanising spirit, and for accelerating the march of civilization by the powerful though silent operation of individual exertion and emulation—means more efficient, safe, and practicable than any that could result from speculative projects of improvement.

They denied that the colonists were indifferent to religious instruction and referred to their appeal for parishes and ministers, which had been treated with neglect. Failing these they had countenanced the Missionaries, as might be proved by the subscription lists and the salaries contributed by the Colonial Treasury to some of them. They were convinced however by experience that the systematic object of the agents of sectarian teaching was to render the

exercise of their ostensible profession subservient to purposes of private gain and emolument, at the expense of the earnings of the labouring classes. With this view they ingratiated with the negroes by indirectly influencing those hopes and passions—which in that class of people are ever susceptible of the most ready and ardent excitement,—and endeavoured to acquire an ascendancy, by representing their agency as essential to promote the temporal advancement of the slave. It was a melancholy truth that the opinion entertained by the slaves of the supposed aptitude and subservience of Missionary instructors to effect their emancipation—and not any desire for religious instruction—was the cause of any attachment or predilection evinced by the negroes for Sectarian Teachers in preference to Clergymen of the Established Church. Instances were frequent of arrogant usurpation of magisterial authority and interference between master and slave—of undisguised contempt for the highest executive and legislative powers in the Colony—and cases could be produced of flagrant extortion attempted to be enforced by threats of excommunication.

The meeting therefore, duly appreciating the important object of creating by means of pure and genuine religious instruction, an effective moral power for the government and control of the labouring population, felt the obligation more imperious on them—particularly after the striking warning furnished by late occurrences,—to rescue and protect their labouring classes from delusive doctrines and perversions of religion. They deemed it their sacred and bounden duty to themselves and their dependents, to oppose and resist by every authorised means, establishment in the colony of Sectaries of any description, and more particularly those of the London Missionary Society. It was therefore resolved that the Court of Policy be forthwith petitioned to expel all Missionaries from the colony and to pass a law

prohibiting the admission of any Missionary preachers into this colony for the future.

They deemed it equally their duty to urge by every means in their power the immediate adoption of measures for organising an adequate and effective system of Religious instruction for their labouring population by means of Ministers of the established Churches. They pledged themselves, both collectively and individually, as far as their limited and impaired resources would admit, to make provision for the support of such an establishment, relying on the sanction, countenance and assistance of the Colonial Legislature and of His Majesty's Government.

They recommended that three Churches, Dutch, English and Scotch, be established, and that provision be made for the Roman Catholics, the majority to decide as to which Church should be established in each parish.

It had been openly declared in Parliament by the enemies of the colonies that the present changes were preparatory to Emancipation, which would mean utter destruction of the colonies. The Secretary of State, instead of stemming the torrent of prejudice, urged the Legislature to adopt a series of measures calculated to effect their ruin. He would prefer their being carried with effect by the Colonial authorities, but he used threats that if this were not done it would be effected without their consent; they looked to the Court of Policy to protect their rights.

They could not avoid expressing their strong feelings of indignation at the attempt of the London Missionary Society to withdraw from the immediate and direct course of justice a prisoner charged with treason committed in this colony,—and their surprise that such a proposition should be listened to by Lord BATHURST so far as to give instructions to the Governor to send the prisoner to England, on the ground that the London Missionary Society had given security for his appearance and innocence—such interfer-

ence was quite unconstitutional and unprecedented. Cherishing sentiments of duty and attachment to the person and Government of their Most Gracious Sovereign, their present situation demanded that they should lay a statement of their perils and grievances at the foot of the throne and implore his protection and interposition.

To frame a Memorial and Petition a committee of fifteen members was elected and it was decided that the resolutions should be published in the three colonial papers and also in *John Bull*, *The Courier*, *The Times*, *The Morning Chronicle* and *The Glasgow Courier*.

The above, which is only a portion of the Resolutions, fairly represents the feeling of the planters in Demerara, in regard to the interference of the British Government with the slave system. A great deal might be said in their favour, and the most determined enemy to slavery must admit that meddling between master and slave could not but tend to strained relations between them, neither beneficial to one or the other party. The planters believed the Missionaries to be insidiously undermining their influence with their property, and like fathers with their children naturally objected to this.

As we have seen, the London Missionary Society was most obnoxious. Besides SMITH, there were ELLIOT and DAVIES; the former had been arrested and detained for ten days at the time of the insurrection, but released when it was found that no disturbance took place in his district,\* while the school of the latter was closed for a time. The Methodists seem to have been more judicious, their coming forward so readily to enroll in the Militia having prevented suspicion. Mr. MORTIER, the leading Methodist, even joined with the Revd. ARCHIBALD BROWNE in the hue and cry against the obnoxious sectaries, and in the mother country

\* Elliott was dismissed in the early part of 1824, by the Missionary Society.



some of the papers took it up, as may be seen from the following extract from the *Glasgow Courier* :—

“ In MORTIER’S conduct we behold genuine Christianity in striking contrast with the arrogant intermeddling and unchristian conduct of the London Missionaries—the spies and workmen of the African Institute—who, according to Mr. BROWNE, substitute ‘ their senseless and ignorant rant ’ as a purer form of religion that existed in the first ages. The resolution of Mr. MORTIER and his colleague to assist to defend the colony was the best evidence of their being not in the most distant manner connected with the rebellion.

“ Will the people not open their eyes ? In the West Indies there are two hundred clergymen, Wesleyans, Moravians, Roman Catholics, and other established churches—twelve Governors, custom houses and judicial establishments—several thousand troops—several men-of-war—above eight hundred vessels daily arriving from and sailing to these possessions—and yet not a single individual ever says anything about cruelty and oppression, but quite the reverse. No ! Such tales are reserved for the Missionaries.”

An acrimonious correspondence was carried on in the *Gazette* in December 1823 and the following month between the Revd. ARCHIBALD BROWNE and the Revd. JOHN DAVIES, as to the right of the latter to marry slaves, such marriages being clearly illegal. DAVIES having conceived himself grossly insulted by a letter of BROWNE in the *Colonist* demanded an explanation, on which the Presbyterian clergyman replied in the *Gazette*. He did not judge it expedient or propose to hold any direct communication with a person connected with a class of men who laboured under many shocking imputations at that moment. He had another reason for not answering and that was the views expressed by DAVIES at a planter’s house two or three years ago. He (DAVIES) there contended that nothing could be done for the conversion and well-being of the negroes, so long as they continued slaves. The position BROWNE had taken up was that if the truths of the Gospel were properly taught them, they could not only be content but extremely happy even in that condition. DAVIES, in reply, said he accounted it a high honour to belong to the Missionary Society. An

enlightened public would not for a moment consider him responsible for the conduct of any *individual*\* who might be accused of dereliction of duty. He denied holding such opinions as BROWNE imputed to him and brought forward his exertions to diffuse the Gospel and introduce marriage, to prove this.

DAVIES wanted to vindicate himself by disclaiming all connection with SMITH, but BROWNE in his answer still asserted that DAVIES had used the expressions referred to, in presence of three gentlemen, and then went on to show the intimate relations of DAVIES and SMITH. At a time when the mangled corpses of those deluded beings, once the flower of the Missionary's congregation were suspended in the air—when dozens were languishing in prison bewailing their folly in having listened to a deceiver—it was too much, he thought, even for Mr. DAVIES to vaunt the name of Missionary.

This was followed by a letter of BROWNE on the marriage laws. He considered marriage as an institution of a mixed nature, in which law and religion were blended, a religious form could confer no civil rights, what then could DAVIES mean by marriage among slaves. His opinion was that until the negroes were better instructed in morals it was advisable to do no more than recommend their masters to explain the obligations they contracted and exact a promise of fidelity. In this opinion he was at one with his Reverend brother of the Dutch Church. The proprietors were also anxious for permanent unions and did everything to prevent promiscuous intercourse; on a number of estates there was a rule that a white man having a child by a slave should forfeit a hundred pounds or leave the employ.

Another letter followed attacking the Missionary system and comparing it with that of the Established Church. The former was inefficient for any useful purpose, a system

\* This is obviously a disclaimer of the views of Smith or his friend Elliot.

of imposition and exaction on the slaves, pernicious interference with the authority of masters, and espionage subservient to personal ambition, commercial speculation and political intrigue. Up till lately he had been prejudiced in their favour but had been compelled reluctantly to give up his opinion. Their exactions had come under his notice and he had remonstrated with ELLIOT and SMITH. In conclusion he quoted extracts from the Missionary Hymn Book, including the now familiar

“ Let the Indian, let the negro,” &c.

as examples to prove their unsuitability to the negroes' comprehension, or rather that they would naturally be understood in a different sense from that intended.

In the *Chronicle* of March 26th 1824, “ A Subscriber” wrote in regard to the doubts being expressed as to whether the Court of Policy could carry out the resolution as to not allowing missionaries to remain in the colony. He reminded them that the Toleration Act did not extend to the colony and that the Governor had always the power to send away any person whatever without even consulting the Council. This power had been frequently exercised without trial or legal process, some being banished as violent characters, some for plugging Joes, some for cruelty to slaves, and some quite recently, simply because they were poor. The Missionaries sent generally proved to be worthless characters and the whole system was totally incompatible with the planters' very existence.

Only two persons in Demerara appear to have taken the part of SMITH, these being his legal adviser WILLIAM ARBINGELL and the Revd. W. S. AUSTIN, who both declared their belief in his innocence. This feeling was natural under the circumstances. They had seen the poor man in his trouble and sympathised with him, and not having that apprehension of danger which had roused the feelings of the planters, they could not see things in the same light. It does

not tend to produce cordiality when a person looks upon the alarm of others with contempt, it followed therefore that both, but AUSTIN more especially, were stigmatised as enemies to the colony. No language was too strong; as for ARBINDELL, according to the *Chronicle*, the inhabitants could no longer trust him—faith could no longer be put in his word. “And now for the sleek-headed Philistine—the preacher of bad will to all men—the slanderer of all men, and the evil spirit of Demerara. Mr. AUSTIN’s character is for ever gone. As a clergyman he is sunk beyond redemption. His honour is forfeited, his name is blighted. Wherever he goes the finger of hatred shall point him out, and derision shall laugh him to scorn. The pew-holders of St. George’s Church were warned against their pastor, while on the 5th of May “An Episcopalian” said that the congregation were amazed to see Mr. AUSTIN approach the altar the previous Sunday and read the Decalogue, almost every commandant of which he was charged with violating. “Some left the Church in disgust.”

Mr. AUSTIN said nothing while the most scandalous libels were circulating against him—even when he was compelled to resign. He was openly charged with circulating stories against the colonists among the Anti-Slavery party, some of which,—much exaggerated—were used in Parliament and elsewhere against the planters. The *Morning Chronicle* in its report of BROUGHAM’s speech mentioned that PARIS had confessed to AUSTIN that some one had prevailed on him to tell lies. The person referred to was ROBERT EDMONSTONE, representative of JOHN GLADSTONE. PARIS had afterwards confessed that what he told AUSTIN was untrue. “Mr. AUSTIN been tell me for say so—to say it was Mr. EDMONSTONE.” Why did not Mr. AUSTIN defend himself? The above is mild compared with some of the language used by the editor of the *Chronicle* and his correspondents. On May the 3rd, the Puff Adder was described, after which

the article goes on to say that two of them were here, larger but equally poisonous. They had dirty yellow complexions and moved along the ground with their heads inclined to their breasts. They were mild and docile at first, and it was not until they had warmed themselves in your bosoms and betrayed you into a confidence of their harmlessness, that they bit. Such language cannot be defended, even when we take into account the excitement and alarm of the people generally, but it shows how irritated and sore they were at the aspersions of the abolitionists.

In England the insurrection and case of SMITH caused a great stir. BUXTON and GURNEY boasted they had now got a good case against the planters. Such language as "a horrid tale of blood"—"torn to pieces by the lash"—"inhuman torture"—the trial "not only unjust, but absolutely illegal"—was used by these benevolent persons, who only utilised the negro as a stalking-horse for political purposes. BROUGHAM was very eloquent in Parliament in moving a vote of censure on the Government and Court of Policy of Demerara, which was lost by 193 votes to 146. Everything possible was raked up against the planters and Government, among the rest being the story of PARIS'S confession to AUSTIN. The following from *John Bull* gives an impartial view of the matter:—

"Judging from the number of petitions that load the tables of the House of Commons, the case of SMITH has excited an extraordinary degree of public interest, but as we know the arts by which these petitions are obtained, we do not believe the people of England have gone mad, or that they care one fig about SMITH. Let us see what the case really is. A bloody insurrection breaks out, and puts the lives and properties of His Majesty's subjects in the colony in most imminent peril. It is admitted that the chief insurgents belonged to SMITH'S congregation, and that among the congregation of the Wesleyans not one rebel could be found. There were also other causes of suspicion. What could be done with him? Could he be imprisoned indefinitely, or sent from the colony? Was he to be handed over to the Colonial Court? All his advocates admit this would have been inexpedient. The persons who

composed the Court were smarting under the actual wounds they had suffered, fear and prejudice. One other course remained—SMITH was brought before a Court Martial formed of Englishmen—Officers—men of honour—men of sense—above all local prejudices and superior to temporary panic. The Court was the best and purest that could be assembled—if the members who composed it had been associated in London under the name of a jury, no man would have complained. The Government did its duty. The proceedings have been violently arraigned—we deny these charges, but granted, what would be done in England? The judge suspends execution—so did the Governor. In England if the sentence is found invalid, the King pardons—So did the King pardon Mr. SMITH. Whence then the cause of complaint? Even in the shewing of SMITH's advocates we assert that not only has he suffered no hardships, but he was treated in every way as he would have been in England under similar circumstances. Further, we deny that there was any reason to doubt the substantial justice of the verdict. The fact seems to us to be that advantage is taken of SMITH's death, to do what could not have been done if he had lived. That purpose we believe is to intimidate Colonial Governors and Governments from the discharge of their duty in times of peril—to prostrate themselves before every agitator who calls himself a Missionary, and by means of a thousand petitions, to give an ascendancy to a class of persons who, whether intentionally or not, are most dangerous to our Colonial system. We think it but justice to state that Governor MURRAY, having served nine years as Governor of Demerara, his removal had been decided upon before the revolt. When some years ago he had served the time generally allotted to Colonial Governors, a petition was sent from the colony that he might remain, which was acceded to. He has now received an address and piece of plate—previously he had been Governor of Berbice, on leaving which he also received an address and a sword."

## CHAPTER XXV.

### *BERBICE UNDER THE BRITISH, 1796—1834.*

Capitulation on similar terms to Demerara—Increased prosperity—Restoration to Batavian Republic—Mutiny of the garrison—Recapture by British—Inconsistency of Van Batenburg—Opposition of the planters—They appeal to the King—The Governor's speech on the Memorial—Death of Van Batenburg—Low prices of produce—First English Church clergyman—Help sent to St. Vincent after the volcanic eruption there—The Colony estates—Governors—The Berbice Gazette's view of the union.

**I**N 1796 as in 1781, Berbice followed the fortunes of Demerara, being compelled to surrender to a detachment of the British a few days later. By the articles of capitulation private property was to be respected, and Governor VAN BATENBURG, who was retained as administrator, interpreted this in favour of the estates of the Association, although some of the British Officers thought they should be confiscated as belonging to the rulers of the Colony. The Governor however quoted the case where they had been seized and afterwards given up by the French, and also stated that Berbice was under the control of the Dutch Colonial Council, and that the plantations of a company could no more be considered otherwise than private, than those of a partnership, so they were allowed to remain. VAN BATENBURG was very popular among the British Officers, and being a gentleman of the old school, much given to hospitality, he gave general satisfaction.

As in Demerara, the prosperity of the colony was much increased by the change, planters arriving from Barbados

and other islands to take up lands on the coast, which were now granted freely, the money received being handed over to the Association as before. Over a hundred cotton plantations were soon in working order, and as the Devil's Creek was found inconvenient as a limit to Berbice, VAN BATENBURG went to Surinam in 1799 and made an arrangement with Governor FREDERICI—who was in a similar position to himself being Administrator of that Colony under the British—by which the Corentyne river became the boundary between the respective colonies. Even this did not give enough room for the development of cotton, for some of the English went over to Nickerie to establish plantations. In the seven years 1796-1802 the number of slaves increased from 8,232 to 17,885—that is they were more than doubled by English importations for the new estates. Among the purchasers of land was Lord SEAFORTH, who in 1801 became Governor of Barbados and as such virtually the chief authority over Berbice and Demerara,

Great fears were naturally entertained by the new settlers when the colony was given up to Holland, but it does not appear that many changes were made. VAN BATENBURG sailed for the Netherlands in 1802, leaving Councillors HEBLIN and HOBUS to administer the government, he intending to apply to the authorities for re-appointment, but on arriving in the Channel he found that war had already been declared and was obliged to go to London.

Meanwhile the new soldiers who had been sent out after the evacuation of the British had mutinied, giving a great deal of trouble before they could be compelled to surrender by help from Surinam and Demerara. Bad food, sickness, and unsuitable accommodation were the causes of the revolt, in the course of which the soldiers hoisted the British flag and offered to enter that service and hold the colony for England.

On the 23rd of September 1803, the authorities were



called upon to surrender again to the British by Captain BLAND and Lieutenant-Colonel NICHOLSON, on terms similar to those of 1796. The provisional government feeling they could do nothing to defend the colony, drew up a series of articles which were concluded and signed the following day. The second of these read as follows :—

“The plantations, lands, manufactories, workshops, slaves, effects, and possessions of the Berbice Association, of whatsoever nature, shall be considered as private property in the same manner as agreed to by the capitulation to General WHITE in May 1796.”

To which the answer was :—

“All private property whatsoever, of individuals, is to be respected.”

All land grants made on the Corentyne river and coast were to be respected, but permission was refused to the Council to dispose of ungranted lands.

Berbice being again a British possession, VAN BATENBURG was reinstated, and on the 25th of June 1804, he again assumed the government. For some reason or other—perhaps to ingratiate himself with the British Government—his opinion in favour of the Colony estates being private property had undergone a complete change during his absence, and he told the Council that he intended taking them over in the name of the King. At the meeting of the Council of the 2nd of July following he also called attention to the acre money, which it seems had not been collected since the colony had been taken in 1796, and as the Chest was very low he stated his intention of ordering the arrears to be paid up. The Council objected to this on the ground that the acre money belonged to the Association, being private property under the capitulation, not that they cared so much for the old authorities as that the tax had lain dormant so long that it would be very disagreeable to have it revived.

The Governor stuck to his point on the ground that all charges, incomes, and other moneys, formerly paid to the

Directors or the Dutch and Batavian Government, now belonged to His Britannic Majesty, and that he had received instructions to have them collected, which however he did not exhibit to the Council, who considered him as acting on his own responsibility. Accordingly he took over the estates of the Association and issued a notice in his own name calling for payment of all arrears of acre money, which was scarcely noticed as the planters took the same view as the Council. A second notice was issued threatening execution if the tax were not paid, but again without result except to increase the opposition. A meeting of the planters was held in the Union Coffee House at New Amsterdam, April 12th, 1805, to consider what means should be taken to obtain their rights, when a Committee was appointed to draw up a Memorial to the King showing their grievances, which was read at another meeting on the 23rd of the same month. Three Commissioners were then appointed to proceed to England and act in the interests of the inhabitants.

The Governor, who was rather hot-tempered, was naturally annoyed at this defiance of his authority, and threatened to prosecute everyone concerned in the meetings, going so far as to revoke the licence of the Coffee House. The Fiscal, not agreeing with him and refusing to prosecute, resigned his office, which could not be filled in Berbice, so he sent to Demerara and got what the opposition styled "an unfrocked advocate" to do his dirty business. Now he set to work and collected some of the taxes, those who refused to pay being threatened with the military if they resisted the Marshal in his duty of carrying out the levies. Most of them had now to submit, which they did under protest. Four of the Councillors resigned, and as the two others were tools of the Governor they nominated friends of their own, so that the Council fell entirely into the Governor's hands.

One of the charges made against him was a declaration of UNGER, the old administrator of the colony plantations, that the Governor had taken the books from him, and on their return UNGER had found false entries made to show that money had been paid to the Governor during the former occupation of the British, even going so far as to include Colonel NICHOLSON as having received regular sums. On questioning the book-keeper in whose writing the new entries had been made he stated that VAN BATENBURG had ordered him to do it and said he would take the responsibility on himself. In the declaration UNGER said, that from bodily fear he had resolved to take no steps in the colony while it was under VAN BATENBURG'S rule, but to refer it to the High Courts at home as soon as he arrived, he being then about to embark on the voyage.

The matter having been brought before the British Government, it was referred to VAN BATENBURG for report. In a speech to the Council, January 8th 1806, he attempted to vindicate himself from the numerous charges of the opposition. He had received from Lord CASTLEBROUGH by the last mail a copy of a Memorial to the King, signed by GEORGE BAILLIE and LAMBERT BLAIE in the name of the planters and other inhabitants of Berbice. In this libel he was charged with having committed oppressions and abuses of authority which had made him odious to all of His Majesty's subjects in the colony, and rendered him unworthy of being continued in his present important office; the Memorialists begging for that reason that it might please His Majesty to recall him, and let them enjoy such relief as to him might seem meet. He (VAN BATENBURG) would not weary them by communicating the Memorial at full length, as it was a frivolous production of thirty-two pages, filled up with jeremiads of pretended wrongs and grievances, of which however not one was proved. It seemed purposely extended to that length in order that it

might have the appearance of containing numberless complaints and heavy accusations, but they were really very few. He was charged first with issuing proclamations without the concurrence of the Council, among them those relating to acre money; then that by dismissing a member of the Council, he had caused the resignation of three others; that he had never given any account of the revenue and expenditure of the colony to the Council, from which they suspected mismanagement and peculation; that he had withdrawn the colony artificers and negroes from the public service, suffering the fortifications &c. to be neglected, and that he employed them for his own convenience; and finally that the Secretary and Government Secretary had under his sanction exacted exorbitant fees of double and treble the former amounts.

These accusations, he said, were the essential part of the Memorial, which however had been spun out to its tiresome length by the use of aspersions and arguments entirely void of proof, truth and foundation, inflated with high words such as Violation of Capitulation, Charters, Laws, Regulations, Legal Authority, Constitution, Privileges, &c., which expressions were intentionally used, as they well knew that these never failed to raise in the breast of every Englishman, the highest indignation against any guilty person, and that by these means the general hatred would be excited towards him. At the same time they all knew that not three men in the colony were thoroughly acquainted with the constitution, the nature of the rights and privileges it bestowed, the authority of the Governor and that of the Council, therefore it was quite easy to make the people believe he had acted unconstitutionally. He was extremely happy that the impartial disposition and just sentiments of the noble Lord gave him an opportunity of clearing his character by supplying all the explanations, and proving that this wanton and impotent attempt to injure

him could only serve to make apparent the malevolent disposition of the memorialists, who wished to exert their malignity and private pique under the cloak of the representatives of a respectable community, while in fact, as was well known to them and the whole colony, the zeal of Mr. BLAIR for the general good had never yet been proved on any occasion, but the contrary often complained of, and the steps he had now taken proceeded from a cowardly wish to avenge himself for the spirited objections which he (VAN BATENBURG) had made to transactions injurious to His Majesty's dignity and the general interests of the colony, also for the contempt in which he held BLAIR's person and character of which he had made no secret in a correspondence in which he had used the language of a gentleman of honour and principles, while BLAIR displayed that of an enraged individual of the lowest extraction. They all knew him; there were amongst them those who had experienced the sordidness of his interested disposition, and nobody would deny that when that man was actuated by motives of interest, the meanness of his character was fully displayed, while his pompous pride was likewise conspicuous when he exhibited his ridiculous vanity. Both had been wounded and hurt by him, and now BLAIR had avenged himself in a manner congenial to his feelings.

In respect to Mr. BAILLIE, the Governor confessed himself perfectly ignorant of the cause of his wrath. When in London he had very little connection with that man; his ridiculous pride and pretensions making him undesirous of seeing him often. The only reason for his joining BLAIR in this diatribe was his natural propensity to slander and calumny, of which the clearest proof was brought before the public in a late prosecution against him in London for libel, wherein he was called by the Solicitor-General "a malignant, malevolent, black-blooded libeller." The Governor imagined that the severe lesson he received on that

occasion would have prevented a relapse; he observed however that BAILLIE was incurable.

No one of them was ignorant of the manner in which the signatures of almost all the subscribers to the appointment of agents had been obtained. The people were made to believe that it was to obtain agents at home like other colonies, and only a few had any idea that their first step would be to libel him to His Majesty.

After explaining that certain questions were to be answered and that a Committee would have to be appointed, he went on with his abuse. While the Committee was carrying on its investigations he would employ all his leisure in drawing up his defence, in which he would prove incontrovertibly the frivolity, falsehood, malignity, and infamy of the charges, and obtain a victory over the two slauderers which would blast their characters for ever and establish their impotent villainy, whilst the purity of his own principles being proved, would make the blush of shame appear upon them if the blackness of their hearts did not prevent the crimson hue from rising up to their brazen faces. He was sorry for the trouble and loss of time which the investigations would entail on the Committee, and would have abstained from intruding upon them if those vile calumniators had limited their effusions of rage to vomiting their venom in handbills, Supplements to Gazettes, &c., which must have no other effect upon the public than to make their contemptible characters appear in the real light, and upon which he looked with too much contempt to resent in the manner he certainly would do if he thought the authors worth his notice, attention and revenge.

Fortunately for these colonies such language as the above cannot be equalled anywhere else than in Berbice, or from the mouth of other than VAN BATENBURG, who shows his character here in a way that requires no interpretation. What would have been the result of the investigation is

doubtful, but VAN BATENBURG, becoming sick, went over to Barbados to recuperate, where he died soon after his arrival in November 1806, and was succeeded by Colonel NICHOLSON.

Most of the early British Lieutenant-Governors who succeeded VAN BATENBURG were simply Military Commanders, and not likely to interfere with the rights of the Council, so there were no more difficulties in that respect. The colony continued to progress slowly, the slaves increasing to 25,169 in 1811, which appears to have been the highest number ever registered in the colony. There were then 550 whites and 240 free coloured people, and the Government expenditure amounted to £207,980 for that year, being less than half that of the year 1810, having been reduced to this extraordinary extent by *Governor General* GORDON, who was a Berbice planter and had the interests of the colony at heart.

As in Demerara, the low prices of the staples of the colony were much felt in Berbice at this time, a meeting of the planters being held on the 20th of January 1812 to consider the state of affairs and petition the British Government for relief. Berbice had an Agricultural Society, which held its meetings at the planters' houses and offered in 1812 protection for models of machines submitted in the same way as if patented, and a premium for information as to the preparing of plaintain fibre. Five Joes were given to Mr. ANDREW BLACK for the best model of a weaving loom, and a similar premium for a spinning machine for preparing plaintain fibre for the loom.

The first clergyman of the Church of England in this colony was the Revd. F. WHITFIELD, who held his first services at the King's House in January 1812, to which all ranks of persons were invited. On the 1st of February notice was given that in future, service would be performed in the house lately occupied by Mr. TIEBOL, the lot being advertised for transport a week later, when a bell and belfry

were also "Wanted." The Reverend gentlemen got into difficulties in 1816 on the question of marrying without first getting the necessary documents from the Secretary's Office, and was banished from the colony. The cost of the Church establishment in 1812 was f3,000 and the salaries of Revd. Dr. SCHWIERS (Dutch) and Revd. F. WHITFIELD f7,000 each.

The town was superintended by a Commissary, who called the owners of the lots together annually for the purpose of submitting his accounts and to discuss matters connected with town improvements. The Winkel Department undertook all kinds of house-carpenters, boat-builders, masons, coopers, blacksmiths and coppersmiths' work for the planters as well as the Government, but it does not appear to have been a monopoly as in the early period.

The intimate connection with Nickerie is shown by an advertisement in the *Gazette* of the colony that the Phoenix Saw-Mill Company of that district offered to supply house-frames, kokers, and bridges; whether this was worked by a steam engine or not does not appear, but such is probable as some had already been imported into Demerara.

In May 1812, the great volcanic eruption in St. Vincent was reported in the colony, and immediately a number of gentlemen chartered the Brig *Speculation* to carry help to the sufferers, which left early in June. The cargo contributed shows what could be raised in Berbice on an emergency. It consisted of 1,000 lbs. ground provisions, 192,000 ears of corn, 4,000 bunches green plantains, 6 casks plantain flour, 142 packages dried plantains, 9 casks cassava bread, 9 casks Indian corn, 3 casks rice, 13½ barrels and 1 tierce beef, 2½ barrels pork, 2 barrels flour and 2 puncheons ship's bread.

Something must now be said about the Colony estates, which still remained in the hands of the Government, notwithstanding that representations had been often made to



the Home authorities that they were private property. They were now reduced to four, *Dankbaarheid*, *St. Jan*, *Dageraad* and *Santvoort*, having altogether in 1811, seven hundred and ninety-one slaves and valued at £110,625. No revenue was derived from them, and the slaves diminishing in numbers; Parliament appointed seven persons as Berbice Crown Estates' Commissioners, including several prominent members of the Anti-slavery party. These tried several experiments, allowing the Winkel slaves a greater amount of freedom to work for wages, appointing Mr. WRAY the missionary to attend to their religious instruction and otherwise doing their best according to their lights to ameliorate their condition. Whatever else may have resulted there was no reduction of the death rate, but on the contrary an increase, while the profit was just as much as when they were under the Government, that was nothing. In their report for 1812-14 they said that a worse field or a less favourable time for an experiment could scarcely have been chosen, as what with losses from the American privateers, the low price of produce—and they might have said, bad management—it could not have been expected that the estates would suddenly become remunerative.

Meanwhile, arrangements were being made in Europe for the settlement of affairs, and among others the claims of the Berbice Association were considered, it being decided in 1814 that the estates should be given up, which was done two years later. The Association could do very little with them—in fact it is doubtful if they ever had given a profit—it was therefore resolved that they should be sold. They were finally disposed of in 1818, with their 683 slaves, for £66,000, to Messrs. D. C. CAMERON, HENRY DAVIDSON, and ÆNEAS BARKLY, and three years afterwards the Association, having concluded the sale and transported the four plantations, retired from Berbice. Their other properties, which could not be sold, and which were already abandoned, were

left to the Government, and the Association proceeded to wind up its affairs, which was finally accomplished in 1848.

The downfall of cotton was much felt in Berbice, perhaps more so than in Demerara, and a great many planters became insolvent. Eleven members of the Council were thus unfortunate and Governor BENTINCK himself was compelled to arrange with his creditors. The total number of cotton plantations given up between the years 1809 and 1824, amounted to a hundred and eleven, only fourteen of these being replaced with sugar; there were also twenty-one coffee estates in the same position, five of which were put in sugar. The actual gain in sugar plantations, including four that had been lately empoldered, only amounted to twenty-one, while a hundred and thirty-two in sugar, coffee and cotton had been given up. There remained then in the colony a hundred and eleven plantations, sixty being in coffee, twenty-six in cotton and twenty-five in sugar.

Berbice, although nominally an independent colony before the union in 1831, was sometimes under the Governors of Essequibo and Demerara. The military command of the two colonies might devolve on the same Officer, as in the case of Brigadier-General MURRAY who while acting-Governor of Berbice was called upon to administer the neighbouring colony. The most influential Governor appears to have been BENTINCK, who was appointed to Berbice after his explanation with the Secretary of State, and died there on the 1st of November 1820. In speaking of him the *Gazette* of Demerara said that every one acknowledged that as a man he evinced the possession of a most generous heart, and as a Governor, the best intentions. On one occasion before the union Sir BENJAMIN D'URBAN administered the Government at the same time as that of the other colony and altogether Berbice became more and more secondary to Demerara. The last independent Lieutenant-Governor was HENRY BEARD, who was not altogether liked and the

people appear to have been glad of an excuse to get rid of him.

From the following article in the *Berbice Gazette*, April 1842, it appears that the *Union* did not give unqualified satisfaction :—

“ Many of our readers agree with us as to the advantage and necessity for this measure, but look upon its attainment in a very doubtful light. They express a hearty desire for the repeal, but say ‘ we shall never see it in our days.’ The blind policy of 1831 was instigated by a spirit of dissension, which has done more injury to the colony than anything else. Our representatives in the Court of Policy have never been of sufficient force to secure us any real benefit, or guard us from certain evil, and we have been impudently told that we have not a fit man among us to represent us properly. We have many. We possess men of talent, wisdom, education and firmness among our higher orders, but we cannot expect the total abandonment of their individual interests, on which the pressure of the present times is heaviest. Place us therefore in a position to enable us to call forth that latent wisdom and firmness without injury to themselves, but on the contrary to our mutual advantage and honour. The advantage we anticipate is reduction of the enormous taxation, as our separate Civil List would not amount to anything like the proportion paid now to the Colony Chest. We want a local Government composed of members holding the strongest interest in the county—the possession of property. The suppression of grievances bitterly felt by ourselves cannot interest strangers who pretend to legislate for us seventy miles off. We had a more respectable standing as the Colony of Berbice instead of a miserable county. It is not a question of national pride but national prosperity. Demerara has sprung a leak ! She is sinking fast ! And if we do not cast off the grapplings which lash us to her, we shall share in her extinction.”

In reviewing the history of Berbice as a separate colony, we cannot but remark that her position was never a very prosperous one. She lost nothing by the union but an arbitrary government that was often very unpopular and could never be satisfactory. In the days when cotton was king she shared in the prosperity of the sister colony, but when that became no longer remunerative her ruin was more complete than that of Demerara. There is so little to record later that a separate chapter will be unnecessary ;

all the difficulties of the planters were the same as those of the two rivers, but speaking generally there has always been less enterprise and fewer labour troubles in Berbice.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### *D'URBAN AND THE ORDERS IN COUNCIL, 1824—1833.*

Arrival of D'Urban—"Ruin" in the West Indies—Expenditure of Government—Patent offices—Order in Council for compulsory manumission—Protests—Steam-boats introduced—Newspapers suppressed—Union with Berbice—The Governor publishes his views on the Orders in Council—Opinions of the two newspapers on the state of affairs—Meeting of planters in London—Parliamentary Committee's report—Opinion of a correspondent of the "United Service Journal"—Vacuum pan introduced—Progress—Review of slave system and Indian policy.

**S**IR BENJAMIN D'URBAN arrived on the 24th April 1824, while the colony was still agitated by the feelings engendered during the late insurrection. On leaving Antigua, where he had administered the government for nearly four years, he received addresses from both the Council and Assembly expressing their regret at his departure at a time when distress and poverty stared every man in the face.

Throughout the West Indies the periodical cry of "ruin" was again heard, and the Guiana colonies were not much better off than their neighbours. The high prices of the beginning of the century had been much reduced since the peace, but on the whole the three rivers were fairly prosperous. Sugar had become more and more the staple, while cotton and coffee had decreased to about a fourth of the amount of the best years. The sugar crop of 1824 was about 42,000 tons, which amount remained the annual production for the next ten years, notwithstanding the steady decrease of cotton and coffee.

The insurrection naturally cost a good sum, the expenditure from the King's and Colonial Chests amounting in

1824 to £89,332, against £49,434 the previous year. In comparing this with the enormous cost of the government of to-day, it must be taken into account that the most important offices were kept up by fees. For example the Government Secretary was paid a salary of £214 5 8, while his fees amounted to about £1,500, and the Colonial Secretary, who carried on the office by means of two deputies and had never been in the colony himself, received nothing beyond a house allowance of £178 11 5, although his fees amounted to the enormous sum of about £13,000. In 1827 the fees of the First Marshal or Exploiteur were said to be worth about £6,000, the holder never having been in the colony, while his deputy was then absent and the duties performed by an acting deputy.

Among the first difficulties with which the new Governor had to contend, was an Order in Council granting new privileges to the slaves, and among the rest compulsory manumission, that is if the slave wished to buy his freedom he could obtain it on payment of his assessed value whether the master consented or not. But, in passing a local slave ordinance, the Court of Policy ignored this, stating that they considered it would impose upon them a violation of the property of their fellow-subjects, which they had been sworn to preserve, as well as be an infringement of the fundamental laws of the colony. They also felt that such a law would be a breach of the Articles of Capitulation, confirmed by the peace of Paris, which guaranteed the inhabitants in the possession of their private property, of which slaves formed a large part. Lord BATHURST then sent out a draft ordinance for compulsory manumission, and again the Court of Policy refused to pass it, agreeing however to simplify the forms of manumission and render it less expensive, but absolutely declining to make it legal to force a man to sell his property against his wish.

As the Secretary for the Colonies still insisted upon the obnoxious ordinance, petitions were forwarded from merchants and proprietors in London, Liverpool, and Bristol to the King in Council asking that no Order should be made without their being first heard in defence of their rights and interests. This having been granted, Messrs. ADAM, CARR, and HIBBERT appeared before the Privy Council on the 7th of July 1827, to state the case on behalf of Demerara and Berbice planters and mortgagers. In his address Mr. ADAM said that the gentlemen he represented held their property in their slaves as firmly and inviolably as their Lordships held their landed property in Great Britain. Sugar could not be cultivated without Africans or their descendants. It was much too late in the day to contend that European labour could accomplish it. It was an undoubted fact that the number was barely sufficient for the demands of the estates then in cultivation, there was therefore no resource; if the number was diminished the cultivation must be lessened also. As a matter of fact free negroes had never been known to work for hire on a sugar plantation, so that any increase of manumissions would necessarily lessen the amount of labour. The owner of an estate could not strike off a certain number of slaves, reduce his establishment, and yet proceed with his cultivation by the rest. In a very short time he would be deprived of the means of productive labour and the estate would go to ruin. Then, when sugar cultivation had been given up in the English colonies, foreigners would step in and a great increase of the horrors of the slave traffic would naturally follow.

This appeal caused a little delay but ultimately the matter was decided against the planters, compulsory manumissions being provided for by the consolidated slave ordinance of 1831.

In 1825, a local Steam Navigation Company was estab-

lished. Steam engines for cane mills had been in use since about 1805, when the first were imported for Plns. *Belle Vue* and *Hague*, and by this time had to a considerable extent driven out the old horse, cattle and wind mills. The difficulty of working the ferry boats against the strong current of the Demerara River, now induced some of the colonists to make an effort to overcome this. On the 30th June the *Gazette* felicitated the public on the probability of the formation of a Joint Stock Company for the introduction of one or more Steam Vessels, which the editor considered would be of immeasurable utility to these valuable possessions. The prospectus was published on the 16th of August, the capital being £30,000 in shares of £50 each. Mr. MACOMB was the projector, and it was agreed that he should have his expenses paid, as well as a share of the profits. It was expected that with two steam vessels of thirty horse power each and eighty-one feet keel, costing £7,000 each and spending £1,200 per annum for fuel &c., the profits would amount to fifteen per cent. The revenue would be derived from the towage on vessels, conveyance of troops and stores to the different posts, transportation of passengers coastwise and of light freight for families and estates, towage of produce to port and supplies to estates, hire for parties of pleasure and pilotage of vessels, while larger vessels might go to Barbados. Two voyages per week to Essequibo and Berbice and back would meet the wishes of persons whose interests called them in those directions, while town and country correspondence could be oftener and more regularly exchanged. Central places in certain districts would be chosen to land and embark passengers &c., these being protected from sun and rain by awnings while on board. It was stated that Mr. MACOMB had already been instrumental in providing Trinidad and Martinique with steam boats.

The Board of Directors was chosen at a meeting held at



the Colony House on the 17th of November, and in March of the following year they bought the Cambria, which was already in the colony. Among the Directors were Messrs. CROAL, RAINEY, BEAN, ALBUOY, and URQUHART, the Secretary being CHARLES CONYERS. On the 29th of April the Cambria made a trip to Surinam, lasting eight days, the fares for the whole excursion being 110 guilders, or for one way only 88 guilders. To help the Company the Court of Policy passed an ordinance creating the Steamboat Association a branch of the pilot establishment.

On the 26th of January 1828, the *Gazette* reported that DAVID REOCH had returned to the colony with two powerful steam engines and other machinery for the Ferry Steam Boat, and in a few weeks he expected to have this conveyance ready. The new vessel was announced as about to make the first long trip on the 27th of April, and on the 3rd of May she went up to *Christianburg* on a pleasure trip in seven hours and forty minutes, returning the following day in five minutes longer time. She was announced to take her station on Sunday morning the 25th of May, since which time the ferry has been kept up by steam boats. An ordinance was passed on the 21st of August following, fixing the rates of passage and freight &c., at a guilder for a white or free coloured person and half a guilder for a slave.

In the suppression of the slave revolt on the East Coast a great deal of ill-feeling towards the missionaries was produced, as we have already shown, and this was naturally extended to the whole Anti-Slavery party. The newspapers of the colony were particularly virulent against everything in the shape of interference from outside. The language used in writing against the obnoxious Orders in Council became at last so strong that the Governor resolved to put it down, the result being that the *Colonist* was suppressed entirely and the *Guiana*


*Chronicle* stopped on three different occasions. Every Order in Council was disputed more or less, the Court of Policy being foremost in resenting this interference. In 1826 a Proclamation was issued that no Ordinances were to come into operation until confirmed by His Majesty, unless the Lieutenant-Governor should be of opinion that they were of such urgency and importance that the operation could not be delayed. This was renewed annually for several years, and tended more and more to increase the friction between the government and the planters. D'URBAN however, seems to have carried everything in spite of the opposition, carrying out his orders with firmness, and in an arbitrary manner that kept down the passions of the colonists, but could not possibly conciliate them.

The great event of the administration of Sir BENJAMIN D'URBAN was the union of Demerara and Essequibo with Berbice. The latter colony was not very prosperous, and it was stated that the then Lieutenant-Governor, HENRY BEARD, was rather obnoxious to the colonists, which made them willing to unite with the more flourishing sister colony. Very little notice was taken of this important event by the *Gazette*, probably on account of the press being so much restricted at this time. The official Proclamations were published on the 21st of July, 1831, the first stating that Sir BENJAMIN D'URBAN had exhibited to the Court of Policy his Commission as Governor of British Guiana, while others contained the Order in Council, declared the various Officers of Demerara and Essequibo to be in future those of British Guiana, and stated that the colonies were united. The Royal Commission was read before the President of the Court of Justice and the members of the Court of Policy, and announced by a salute from the Fort.

Among the alterations made on account of the union was the revival of the College of Kiesheers, while a con-

solidated slave ordinance and new courts of criminal and civil justice were provided for at the same time.

These changes met with some opposition which led to a Proclamation of the Governor dated February 7th, 1832. It had come to his knowledge that erroneous opinions were still entertained as to the right of His Majesty in Council to make laws binding on the colony, he therefore published some extracts from a despatch of His Majesty's Government for general information. They had received with serious concern the intelligence of efforts being made by some of the inhabitants to resist the execution of the Order in Council of February 1830. It had been asserted in a petition of July previous and maintained by some of the members of the Court of Justice that the capitulation of 1803 invested the Court of Policy with exclusive legislative power within the colony, subject to no control except the ultimate veto of His Majesty. Mr. President WRAY, on the contrary, maintained that the King with advice of his Privy Council had power to make laws binding on the colony. It was superfluous to say that His Majesty's Government were fully prepared to maintain the accuracy of Mr. WRAY's opinion, and if necessary enforce obedience to the Royal Orders in Council by the most decisive measures consistent with law. The usages of Demerara from its first settlement concurred in supporting this assertion of His Majesty's right. It could not be contended without a manifest violation of truth that under the Dutch Government the Court of Policy enjoyed as a matter of right, or exercised as a matter of fact, such an exclusive power as was claimed, for the authority of the States General and the Prince of Orange was habitually exercised as occasion required. It even seemed questionable whether they had any right to legislate at all, except on matters of revenue and taxation, and minor matters of local police which were too petty to engage the attention of the parent state. Within two



years of the conquest the right of His Majesty was exercised in the abolition of the slave trade, the unpopularity of which act was a matter of history. After that and before the final cession of the colony the state of war diverted the attention of the British Government from the internal concerns of the colonies. Then, the practice of allowing Governors to be interested in sugar planting and commercial operations, rendered them remiss in their more important duties, and even generated a disposition to favour claims derogatory to Royal authority. Hence a series of measures were adopted, sometimes on their sole authority and sometimes with the advice of the Court. As soon as the fact of these usurpations came to light a series of annual Orders in Council were commenced to give temporary validity to those unauthorised acts. From this it appeared that these encroachments had not only been unrecognised but denounced by these Orders in Council. As to the Articles of Capitulation nothing was more fully established than the right of the Sovereign. The captors took the representations of the colonists but neither did nor could invest the Court with new powers. It had been assumed that a Capitulation was equivalent to a Charter, but such was not the case, it being only provisional. The promises to Demerara were almost the same as to other captured possessions, and it had never been maintained that the laws were fixed by them, for the British laws of trade and Courts of Vice-Admiralty were established at once without opposition. No Commander could make a capitulation which would abridge the rights of His Majesty. To maintain permanently Dutch institutions within the British Empire would be an anomaly which the usages of no civilised state would recognise.

In 1832 the *Courier* was the organ of the Planters, and the *Gazette* that of the Government. In April, the latter, speaking of the new regulations of the Courts of Justice,

said they were a great boon to the community and had opened out a new era in jurisprudence. The tardiness and expense of the old system rendered it necessary to calculate before bringing an action whether the amount of the debt was worth it. It had been the fashion to decry reform, but the most zealous stickler for ancient institutions must see that such an improvement as that lately introduced was salutary.

The *Courier* in the same month, took up the cry of "ruin," and the necessity for a loan of ten to twenty millions sterling to the West Indies. The inadequate prices and interference with the rights of property, the editor said, were ruining the colonies. Rum was almost without value, the planters were in the last extremity, and it was simply the beginning of the end. If the duty on sugar were not reduced the colonies would not survive. Danger and distress then prevailed, and if no early and effectual measures of relief were taken, the valuable stake of Great Britain in her West Indian Colonies would be gone for ever.

The editor of the *Gazette* gave his opinion on the matter as follows:—

"When a man buys land he calculates the profit on the produce. If this rises land increases in value, if it falls it is of course of less value. In the course of twenty-five years the amount of produce extracted from the soil by the sweat of the brow of the planter—yes, of the planter, not of the predial labourer—doubled itself, and the importation of sugar into Great Britain increased from 100,000 to 180,000 tons. With the increase of importation has come a gradual decline in price. Here is the cause of depression. The interference with hours of labour was more than compensated by machinery, which greatly contributed to the over production. The property in the West Indies can never be restored to its former extravagant estimate. It is not in the power of the government to alter it, however it may be inclined. Fume, fret, and protest as we may, the affairs of the proprietary must settle down to the present price of produce, and those who have unfortunately pledged their estates when prices were high must submit to the altered circumstances. It will not be the first time the colony has suffered in a similar way. The

change in prices of cotton occasioned by the termination of hostilities actually swept away some of the finest estates on the Coast, but this was not occasioned by the government. As to raising estates to their former value, the thing is not only ridiculous but impossible."

On the 3rd of May a meeting of West Indian Planters was held in London when a string of resolutions were passed. Considering the awful crisis by pressure of pecuniary distress as well as the alarming excitement amongst the negro population, the meeting expressed its opinion of the value of the colonies to the mother country, on the policy lately pursued with regard to them, and on the measures best calculated to avert the impending calamity of their total loss as useful possessions of the British Crown. The duties collected on their produce amounted to seven millions, while they bought British manufactures to the amount of five and a half millions, so that pecuniarily their loss would be injurious to the best interests of humanity. The negroes, if unsupported by the intelligence and capital of the Europeans, would speedily sink into a state of anarchy and moral debasement, and an irresistible inducement be given to foreign colonies to increase their cultivation and extend the African slave trade. The conduct of Great Britain was not consistent with justice and conciliation. She established the slave trade for her own benefit. The colonists were Englishmen, lawfully possessing property under the sanction and encouragement of the mother country, and naturally jealous of their rights and the competency of others to frame regulations for their slaves, when they themselves had a direct interest in the welfare of these people. Popular clamour from mistaken impressions as to their real condition had already produced most disastrous results by alienating the affection of the slave from his master, and of the master from the mother country, destroying the credit of colonial property and causing constant agitation, thus seriously retarding those measures of gradual improvement which it had been the

object of the British legislature to accomplish. In order to avert calamity it would be necessary to grant immediate relief, unrestricted by conditions. A Parliamentary enquiry they thought should be held to ascertain the actual condition and treatment of slaves, their habits and dispositions, and the degree of their progress, and it was agreed to petition the King to that effect.

A petition in accordance with these resolutions was presented by the Earl of HAREWOOD, who said that matters had come to that extreme that few owners received any profit after paying expenses. If it were possible to carry on estates without slave labour they would have been happy to do so, but those who made such a great clamour omitted to point out a remedy. He should like to meet any man connected with the colonies bold enough to propose the emancipation of the whole slave population by Act of Parliament. Much mischief had been done by the Orders in Council; they made the slaves look for something extravagant from England, instead of looking to their masters. These Orders were ill suited to the colonies, as unreflecting people looking at them would think the slaves neglected. Much remained to be done to ameliorate their condition, but to say that they were morally and physically abandoned was an outrage on common sense.

A select committee of the House of Commons having been appointed to consider the state of the West Indian Colonies, formulated a report in June 1832. It had received abundant evidence of distress which was said to have existed for ten or twelve years. This not only affected the planter, but also widows, orphans, and others who had annuities charged upon estates, as well as the slave labourer, who already began to suffer from the deprivation of indulgences, and if continued depression should lead to the abandonment of estates he would be placed in a condition highly dangerous to the public tranquillity. The immediate cause of the dis-

tress was the inadequacy of the returns. The produce of the soil did not obtain a price sufficient to repay the cost of production, and in many cases the deficiency was serious, while very few gave any return of interest on capital. It was stated that the expense of manufacturing a hundred-weight of sugar was 15s. 8d., while the cost of bringing it to market was 8s. 6d., total 24s. 2d., this allowing nothing for interest on capital. The average price in 1831, without the import duty was only 23s. 8d., it followed therefore that there was an average loss of sixpence on each hundred-weight. The Committee however did not accept this as verified and unquestionable but gave it as the statement of the planters. The accounts that produced the average, ranged from 11s. 2d., to £1 1 8d, showing a material difference in the various colonies and plantations, and that there was a profit in some cases and great loss in others. Formerly the colonies were restrained from trading with other than the mother country, and in return they held the monopoly of the home market. Their cultivation was then carried on by slaves supplied by British merchants. In 1807 this trade was made penal, while the British market was no longer closed to foreign produce, thus limiting the supply of labour and bringing the British colonies into competition with those of other countries. The Committee recommended a reduction of the sugar duties, stating that where a burdensome regulation could be removed it would be much better to do this than to grant compensation.

It was afterwards decided by Parliament to grant a million sterling for the relief of the West Indies, in the form of loans of £500 and upwards, payable in ten years with interest at four per cent. In September when the motion for a Committee on the Relief Bill was made in the House of Lords the Duke of WELLINGTON presented a petition from persons interested in British Guiana, stating that they should reject the proposed relief if it were contingent on the



acceptance of the Orders in Council. The bill was however passed, Jamaica being allotted one half of the million and the Crown colonies £58,000, but whether any portion was borrowed by planters of this colony is not quite certain.

In a letter to the *United Service Journal*, a correspondent gives his views of the state of things here. He feared that the situation of Governor of a West Indian Colony must be an ungrateful office, and an Officer of such distinguished rank and talent as Sir BENJAMIN D'URBAN would find himself in an embarrassing situation both with the government at home and the planter in the colony, from the change then being enforced in the whole colonial system. He very much feared that gallant and excellent chief might be so disgusted with the local opposition which the colonists were trying to set up, that he might not choose to retain his government, and then it was to be feared that the army in the West Indies would not see his like again. Had he (the writer) the power he would withdraw the white troops and replace them with a mounted gendarmerie of two hundred free black and coloured people. Had military aid been demanded in Berbice from August to October of the year previous, not more than twenty men out of about two hundred and fifty would have been able to parade at all, and these could hardly have marched and carried arms for a mile. The whole garrison was paralysed with fever and ague, while that at Demerara was much the same. The attempt to keep European soldiers in such a climate was absurd as well as cruel, besides being bad economy.

The year 1830 saw the first introduction of the vacuum pan into the sugar factories. It appears to have been patented by Messrs. OAKS & Co. of London and introduced here by THOMAS DODSON.\* Writing to the *Gazette* in 1832,

\* This gentleman is reported as having been the original of the Alfred Jingle of Dickens' *Pickwick*.

DODSON stated that the success of evaporation in vacuo had surpassed his expectations, and that several improvements had been made since its introduction. Hitherto the manufacture of sugar had received little aid from science, although it was essentially a chemical process. He invited planters to see it in operation at *Richmond* and *Land of Plenty*, where the sugar made was ready to pack after a few hours drying and was so superior in quality as to command a ready sale at 70s. per cwt. while the charge for royalty on that quantity was only sixpence. The editor of the *Gazette* spoke favourably of the new process. The introduction of every new improvement, he said, had to encounter innumerable obstacles, among them being the deep-rooted prejudice in favour of the old system, but stubborn facts must ultimately prevail. A few years before, Demerara sugars bore the lowest grade in the market, and paid the same duty as the highest. Now those prepared by the vacuum pans fetched ten shillings more, were of much better quality, and yet paid no higher duty.

In reviewing the administration of D'URBAN, we cannot but see that the colony was progressing favourably, notwithstanding the low price of sugar. The Public Buildings were in course of erection, while as a result of the great fire of 1823 in New Town several improvements were made in the capital. The Governor was also instrumental in establishing a Philosophical Society and a Book Club, while Lady D'URBAN was patroness of a number of benevolent undertakings. In speaking of her leaving the colony in 1829 the *Gazette* gave her a very high character for urbanity, an affable and amiable deportment, and virtuous and exemplary conduct as a beloved wife and affectionate mother. She was charitable and beneficent, seeking out the fatherless and orphan and supplying their wants, watching over them with an anxious and mother-like solicitude.

Before proceeding to tell the story of the Emancipation

it will be interesting to review the actual condition of the slave.

The abolition of the African trade in 1807 was naturally a great shock to the planters. The old system of buying new labourers to open up and extend the plantations then came to an end, and enterprise in that direction received a check from which it has never since recovered. Very little attention had hitherto been paid to the increase of negroes by natural means, as it was less expensive to buy fresh importations than to trouble about the raising of infants. The negro women were less valuable as labourers than the men, and as the law of supply and demand caused this to be kept in sight in selecting the cargoes, it followed that the ratio of the sexes was more in accordance with polyandry than monogamy. This condition of things, as is well known, is not conducive to natural increase, while the maternal instincts of the negress were so little developed, that the children born of what was almost promiscuous intercourse, were sickly and often died of lock-jaw in the first few months of their existence. On all well-managed estates rules were made for the benefit of pregnant and nursing mothers, and rewards offered for bringing up the children, but without much effect, there being apparently a natural disability for maternal duties.

With the new state of things, something had to be done, and it may be affirmed with confidence, that as a rule, the planters did their very best to preserve their stock of labourers, and looked on every death as a most serious loss. All their care and attention however could not alter one of nature's laws. The old slaves must die off, and the children, even when they struggled through the dangers of infancy, took many years before they became of much use. A few managers, who, like those of the present day, felt that their situations depended on the profits of the estate, tried to make the reduced number of slaves produce

622  
5

as much sugar, coffee or cotton as before, but in this they were not successful. The negro was particularly tenacious of what he considered his rights, and when overworked would make himself very disagreeable and sometimes cause the discharge of an obnoxious manager on the ground of his incompetency to get the work of the plantation properly carried out. Like a child the negro was very fond of complaining to whomever would listen, and when an absentee proprietor visited the colony, he heard a number of frivolous complaints and petitions which on investigation were found groundless. No doubt, real grievances were sometimes ignored on this account, but that could not be helped. If there was a large mortality on his estate, the proprietor was very particular in investigating the cause, as every working negro represented about a hundred pounds of capital, and such capital as could no longer be raised in any legitimate manner.

Cruelty to slaves was punished by heavy fines, on conviction before the Court of Justice. In May 1804 charges were brought against Messrs. J. G. PLETTNER and F. W. WEHIE, which were investigated by a Burgher Committee, who reported that they had found no cause of complaint against the first, but on the estate of the second fifteen slaves had died since January 1803, two of them having hanged themselves. Two were found with marks of severe flogging, and from general information the Committee were of opinion they had not been properly fed. No plantains were on the estate, but Mr. WEHIE assured them that he fed the negroes from his plantation in Leguan. They saw the heads of one of the suicides stuck on a pole in the negro yard, for which permission had been given by Mr. TROTZ. On the whole they were of opinion that more severity had been used than was necessary. The Court of Policy referred the matter to the Fiscal, ordering him to prosecute Mr. WEHIE.

Rumours of intended revolts were not infrequent. On the 1st of May 1804 the Governor reported to the Court that he had heard of a combination among the negroes on several estates on the East Bank that seemed to be of a dangerous nature. A custom prevailed among the negroes of collecting money for funerals. In addition to this the negroes in question held meetings at night for the purpose of drilling themselves in the use of arms. Some of them were styled Kings, Governors, Generals, Fiscals and other high sounding names, and those of several estates met together. Looking upon this as very serious he had made enquiries and had some of the ringleaders arrested and secured on board vessels in the river. They belonged to *Providence, Velselhoofd, Covent Garden, Great Diamond, and Golden Grove*. Having asked the Court what should be done they appointed three members to examine the prisoners and report.

Two days later it was reported that the drilling had been going on at *Success* and other East Coast estates, the leader being one MORRIS, a very bad character, who by the connivance of his master or by paying for it, was nominally free and owned slaves.

The Committee reported on the 30th of May that they considered CUDJO and MORRIS to be very dangerous subjects. CUDJO was looked upon by the Coromantees of the East Coast as their King; he denied the drilling and also that he had captured (while a watchman on *Paradise*) the runaway Coromantees as his slaves, nevertheless the latter statement was corroborated by many witnesses, while it was universally known that he was considered among his nation as a great man, and by his bad disposition, able to make the worst use of his influence. MORRIS of *Success* had purchased his liberty and possessed three slaves. The negroes of the Eboe nation would have elected him their King but for his refusing the offer. He denied being con-

cerned in the drilling, but acknowledged having bought (not stolen) a house-frame belonging to Mr. Post, from a carpenter negro whom he knew had not been authorised to sell it. He had a great party among the Eboes, who might easily be brought to undertake something against the peace of the colony, they therefore recommended that he and the other should be sent away, which the planters also considered very desirable. As to POMPEY, the slave of Mr. BRETON, although it appeared that he was a leader in the drilling, his master assured them that as soon as he had prohibited it, POMPEY had not only given it up himself but as driver tried his best to stop the others. He had already been punished by his master, and they were of opinion that he should be sent back, together with GEORGE and GLASGOW, who appeared to have done nothing deserving of severe punishment. The negroes recommended to be sent out of the colony were :—

BASTA, a cooper of <i>Golden Fleece</i> , valued at	...	£2,200
NAP of <i>Great Diamond</i> , carpenter and house servant	...	£2,200
AZOR of <i>Vëlserhoofd</i> , a driver	... ..	£1,500
BEN of <i>Providence</i> , superintendent of mill	...	£2,200
CUDJO of <i>Paradise</i> , an old decrepid watchman	...	
MORRIS of <i>Success</i> , reputed free	... ..	

The Court resolved to banish them, and authorised the Receiver to pay the owners the amounts of their appraisement. In August the Governor reported having chartered a schooner and sent the prisoners to Trinidad, where they were sold for £395. 8. 6, being a loss to the colony of about £270, besides the expenses, which included £1,100 for the schooner.

On the 23rd, of December 1807 it was reported that a negro rising would take place on Christmas Eve on the East Coast and that the slaves intended to come down to Stabroek when their masters were enjoying the festivities of that occasion. A Scotch overseer heard the story from a negress, and at once reported it to the Governor, who

sent the Fiscal up the Coast immediately with a detachment of troops to seize the ringleaders, while piquets were posted to watch the road. These prompt measures resulted in the capture of twenty, nine of whom were executed, thus preventing what the inhabitants believed would have been a serious riot at least. A piece of evidence brought forward at the trial was a letter in Arabic addressed to the slaves of Essequibo, but as no one in the Court could read it its purport was only guessed at.\*

In August 1808 the Commissaries of the Court of Justice reported that agreeable to the orders of the Court of Policy they had examined the negroes accused of treasonable intentions against the safety and tranquillity of the colony. The charges had no other foundation than the evidence of the negro woman FRANCINA, whose declaration was legally taken. They thought it expedient to confront her with her father VALENTINE, to find out if possible what credit ought to be given to her statements. VALENTINE denied everything, but admitted often speaking to his daughter about the affair of three or four years before, when MAURICE of *Success* and other negroes were sent out of the colony. FRANCINA and VALENTINE both stuck to their stories, so they could find out but little. It appeared that when MAURICE and the others were banished, it had been customary for years for the negroes of every nation in a district to choose head-men or "Kings," under whom were several subaltern officers of the same nation. The duties of the "Kings" were to take care of the sick and purchase rice, sugar, &c., for them, to conduct the burials, and see that the corpse was properly enclosed in a cloth, and that the customary rites and dances were duly observed. An end was put to these "Companies,"—as they were called—among the Congoes, by a quarrel between them and their "King," who at a certain burial declared he had no money, although the people believed he had

\* St. Clair, Residence in the West Indies.

enough for the purpose, as it was impossible that their contributions could all have been exhausted. In consequence the "Company" was abolished and on each estate they had since taken care of their own dead. From the confessions of the Congoes it appeared they had a King, Governor, General Drummer and a Doctor or Lawyer. On account of the reticence of the negroes little could be learnt, but the Commissaries would not discharge them without consulting the Court of Policy. After deliberation it was resolved to send the slaves back to their estates with a caution, and advise their owners to sell the five negro officers out of the colony.

A great deal was said by the Anti-slavery party concerning the restrictions on manumissions, they considering it a grievance that there should be any difficulty whatever in granting a slave his freedom. In this as in many other things they showed their utter ignorance of the difficulties and dangers surrounding the planters, which belonged of necessity to the slave system. Free negroes were in many cases great nuisances; they hardly ever did any work, but were a burden to the community, often living upon their slave relations, and when sick had to be looked after by the Board of Poor's Fund. In some respects the slave colonies got on better than the old countries. They were almost free from poverty, the master having to provide for his negro in sickness and old age. It would of course pay the planter to have given freedom to an aged negro and let him go his own way, rather than keep him as a burden on the estate, and this would have been done in many more cases if there had been nothing to prevent it. Nearly all the cases where freedom was given by the master, were those of elderly men or women for services rendered, or because in the cases of the latter, they had borne him children.

In the early times a bond was required, signed by the master and others, to the effect that they guaranteed the



freedman should not be a burden on the colony, but in November 1804, the Court considered the necessity for further restricting manumissions. It was then stated that in Barbados a sum of money had to be deposited, from which the freedmen, in case they became destitute, were supplied without being a charge or burden on the public. It was therefore resolved that in future a sum of not less than £250 nor more than £750, to be fixed by the Court according to circumstances, should be actually paid before the manumission was granted. These amounts were afterwards given to the Church and Poor Fund, and formed no inconsiderable portion of its income.

To evade this payment, the masters when they gave or sold slaves their liberty, sometimes did it by bill of sale, *i.e.* sold the negro to himself, and although this was illegal a number of persons in the first decade of this century were virtually free in that way. There seems to have been a great deal of looseness generally in carrying out the rules and regulations, the fact was that the only person in the colony bound to prosecute was the Fiscal, and he only did so when there was a certainty of a handsome fine. It would be useless to interfere with an old man or woman, living in a state of reputed freedom, as nothing could be got out of them, even if they were sold to pay expenses.

The petition of CHARLOTTE GIBBS which was brought up before the Court in April 1810, shows some of the difficulties of a free woman. It must be remembered that there were two sets of head-taxes, the one for the Colony's and the other for the King's Chest. CHARLOTTE GIBBS described herself as a free woman of colour and a widow, in distressed circumstances and much depressed with bodily infirmities. Although possessed of nine slaves, she derived no benefit from their labour, but was rather troubled to find support for them. Six of these were children under ten years, two were mothers, and the last was "much addicted to fits."

She had three female children of her own, to maintain and clothe, which under her present circumstances she was unable to do. Formerly she had been assisted by the late PETER TAPPIN, who had been murdered, and now she was quite destitute and unable to pay her Colonial Taxes, she therefore prayed for exemption. The Court in consideration of her peculiar distresses directed the Receiver not to apply for her taxes until further notice.

The number of reputed free people who had never been legally manumitted became so great in 1813 that the Court issued on the 18th of September a Proclamation calling for papers, and in February, 1814, ordered all free black and coloured persons to register their claims before the 18th of March, after which those who produced no documents would be considered as having none. A Committee of the Court was appointed to examine the various documents, which reported on the 4th of November following that they had examined all the claims to freedom and arranged them under nine heads.

The first were those born free, descended from free people or Indian parents. Several of these had affidavits and certificates to that effect; those were all they had to shew, and they had not thought it necessary to get other papers. The Committee had considered these on their merits.

The second were manumissions under different heads which they had adjudged valid. These had been divided into three classes, first, Demerara, Berbice and Surinam manumissions, second, foreign, including West Indian, and third European. The second class were considered doubtful, but as they had no means of checking them they had been passed. The third were mostly frauds brought by Captains of vessels, the bearers never having been in Europe.

The third class of papers were Baptismal Certificates. Of themselves these were no proofs of freedom but these

classified by the Committee had satisfied them that they had been baptised free, and were therefore admitted.

The classes that followed were not admitted, the fourth being bills of sale, deeds of gift, and free passes. The Committee spoke strongly against these. They were manufactured papers of adventurers and runaways from the West Indian Islands, who had long been the leaders of disturbances and night-broils, that had occurred in town. They were the fraudulent productions of bad negroes who had been turned adrift by their owners to avoid prison expenses ; the evasions of old, sick, and diseased negroes, abandoned by their owners, who were glad to get rid of them by any means ; and the pretended tricks of sale from negro to negro.

The fifth were those left free by will but not legally manumitted by the executors ; several of these were considered worthy of protection, they recommending that those who had not done their duty should be compelled to do so. The sixth had no title at all ; the seventh were recommended to be acknowledged as free ; the eighth, papers not satisfactory, and the ninth unauthenticated copies of documents from the Burgher Officers, on which they expressed no opinion. The total number of cases considered were 783, of these 40 were free born, 10 of these being of Indian parentage. The manumissions included 239 of Demerara and Essequibo, 21 of Berbice, 10 of Surinam, 18 of Barbados, 5 of Montserrat, 4 of Dominica, 3 each of Grenada and Trinidad, 2 each of Tobago, Trinidad, St. Martins, and Martinique, 6 of St. Eustatius, 1 each of St. Vincent, St. Kitts, New London, St. Thomas, and Curaçao, and finally 29 European. The approved baptismal certificates numbered 23, the bills of sale 164, deeds of gift 89, those free by will 16, free passes 10, cases recommended 12, while the unsatisfactory papers were 11, and those utterly rejected 69.

On the 6th of April the Court passed an Ordinance to put manumissions on a better footing. They had seriously considered the abuses which had crept in, and the total want of evidence in support of petitions, few or none of them containing sufficient information on which they could adjust what fine should be paid to the poor fund, some being drawn up by persons unacquainted with either owner or slave, these irregularities all tending to defeat the end and intention of "this sovereign grace, to reward exemplary fidelity and good conduct of slaves, by giving them the rights of freedom." It had become absolutely necessary to adopt the strongest measures to prevent the prevalent abuses of persons giving pretended rights of freedom under the form of bills of sale, deeds of gifts, free passes, and general releases from servitude, without first applying for letters of manumission, all of them equally illegal and fraudulent, and which could not convey the civil and political rights of natural born subjects. Hence had arisen numerous evils through such slaves being left to themselves, often without means of support; they having nothing to do, soon became obnoxious to society and in the end fell victims to this unjustifiable practice. To prevent this in future all former acts were repealed and the present ordinance substituted. By this all illegal manumissions were declared null and void, any person giving such in future being liable to a fine of a thousand guilders. Persons desiring to manumit slaves were to petition the Court and give all information, full proof of property, &c., all the parties concerned being required to appear personally before the Court on a day to be fixed and publicly advertised. The amount payable to the poor fund would be fixed according to the circumstances of the case, from  $f250$  to  $f1500$ , besides which the duty of  $f50$  on each would be continued. Before the fees were paid, the Secretary was required to advertise the matter and if there was no opposition, the vouchers showing that the fees

had been paid would have to be forwarded with a second petition for the delivering of the letters of manumission, which on being granted were to be registered within a month at the Secretary's and Fiscal's offices. To prevent cases where persons who after the first petition was granted, might neglect to pay the fees, a sum of not more than £500 was to be deposited, to be forfeited if the papers were not actually taken out within six months. No pretension to freedom could be assumed until the slave was actually possessed of the letters, and while the matter was pending he was to remain subject to the slave regulations. Finally, masters of vessels and others procuring manumissions and selling them to slaves were subject to a fine of a thousand guilders, besides having to refund any money paid by the slaves.

On the 18th of March 1817, the Court passed the first Ordinance for the registration of slaves in compliance with orders from the home Government, which had been moved thereto by a Parliamentary measure introduced by Mr. WILBERFORCE. In some of the West India Islands strong objections were made to this, but here,—except that the planters looked upon it as undue interference—it was so much like the return for assessing the head-tax, that very little was said against it. Every slave owner was to deliver on oath a list of his slaves, with full particulars, annually, on pain of a fine of £1,200, these to be entered in a book and kept open to inspection, any African slaves not so entered being entitled to their freedom.

By this registration, which was completed on the 9th of October 1817, the number of slaves was as follows :—

On 180 plantations in possession of their proprietors	...	24,659
On 150 " " " " attornies	... ..	29,587
On 39 " " " " executors	... ..	7,554
On 2 " " " " guardian of minors	... ..	31
On 9 plantations under sequestration	... ..	987
		<hr/>
Total	... ..	62,718

			Brought forward ...	62,718
Slaves in possession of resident proprietors but not attached to plantations ... ..				11,075
Ditto ditto attornies, unattached ... ..				1,280
Ditto ditto executors ... ..				467
Ditto ditto curators ... ..				7
Ditto ditto guardians ... ..				1,099
Slaves belonging to the Civil Government ... ..				238
Ditto ditto Colony ... ..				6
Ditto ditto Royal Engineer's Department ... ..				84
Ditto ditto Quarter-Master's Department ... ..				63
			Total ...	77,037

The proportion of the sexes was 43,589 males to 33,448 females, this proving what was before stated that the slaves were hardly in a position conducive to natural increase. When it is also considered that the sexes would be more equally distributed among the children, the discrepancy will be seen to be all the greater among the adults, there being probably only one woman to two men. Many of these would be old, and as they died off without issue, before the younger slaves could add to the population, every year showed a natural decrease.

The Anti-Slavery party made capital out of this, which they attributed to cruelty and overwork, but as we have the example of the Colony slaves in Berbice to refute their contention the charges fall to the ground. In another place\* we have shown that under a nominee of the Berbice Commissioners—a set of men chosen from that party—the natural decrease in the slaves was at least equal to that on other plantations. Even at the present day, when the sexes are equal, the negroes of this colony rather tend to decrease than otherwise.

In the Proclamation that the holidays of the slaves would commence on Sunday the 2nd of June 1816, the planters were enjoined not to deprive them of their privileges, but

\* Chapter XXV.

rather to encourage them by granting passes for them to visit their friends, at the same time to superintend them, to prevent excesses, particularly in drink, to limit dancing to the time allowed by law and to strictly examine all strangers to see if they were runaways. The *Gazette* of June 4th, in speaking of the holidays, said that hitherto their general good conduct had fully justified the confidence placed in them. "The slaves in these colonies have always been noted for temperance in their enjoyments and a cheerful return to their respective labours."

Notwithstanding this compliment to the slaves in general, there were sufficient cases to show that some of them were very troublesome and unruly, especially those who were allowed by their masters to hire themselves as porters. A gentleman walking in Water Street one day was obstructed by a gang of porters arranging themselves in a line across the road to delay his progress, on which being annoyed, he struck one of them with his cane to make him move. It does not appear that the blow was a heavy one, nor was it followed up by any further attack on the negro, yet on the complaint of the latter to his master the gentleman was brought up before the Court of Justice and fined. From an advertisement in April 1818, it appears that Mr. C. S. GOULET was attacked by some negroes when going home between eight and nine o'clock at night, was knocked down, and had his money, watch and hat stolen. Wakes were the occasion of a great deal of drunkenness and quarrelling, the money saved by the slaves being contributed for the purpose of a grand jollification. Porters and others, who paid their masters fixed rates of wages, and often earned double or treble these amounts, were the leaders in these orgies.

After the Order in Council of 1816, several others were issued, all tending to ameliorate the condition of slavery. These were consolidated in that of November the 2nd 1831

which took away nearly all the disabilities of the negroes, giving them the right to hold property, marry, bring actions at law, and if wronged, to complain to the "Protector." It may be confidently stated therefore that in the year 1833 they had very few grievances.

The Indian policy of the Government\* had developed mainly from the fear of Bush Negroes. There were six Protectors of Indians for the several districts, whose offices were honorary, the paid Post-holders being under them and generally receiving salaries of two thousand, two hundred guilders per annum. The "Protectors" lived in town and knew very little of the actual condition of the people under their care, trusting entirely to the reports of the Post-holders and the stories of the Indians who came to make complaints or ask for presents. They were however bound to visit the posts in their districts every third year, when the presents were distributed. Besides these periodical distributions they were entitled to give allowances of food and rum according to circumstances, and it was suggested, with what truth it is hard to say, that a proportion of the nominal cost of the presents went into their own pockets. Hillhouse gave the amounts paid annually by the Colony in 1825 as follows:—

Six Post-holders	...	...	...	f13,200
Three Assistants	...	...	...	1,800
Expenses of Protectors	...	...	...	9,000
Share of triennial presents	...	...	...	10,000
				<hr/>
				f34,000

Besides this there were extras, such as repairs to Posts and cost of Bush expeditions, which would make the annual Indian charges amount to over £3,000.

What did the colony get in return for this? In the years 1793-4 the Caribs alone furnished nearly eight hundred men

\* The following is mainly compiled from Hillhouse's "Indian Notices" 1825.



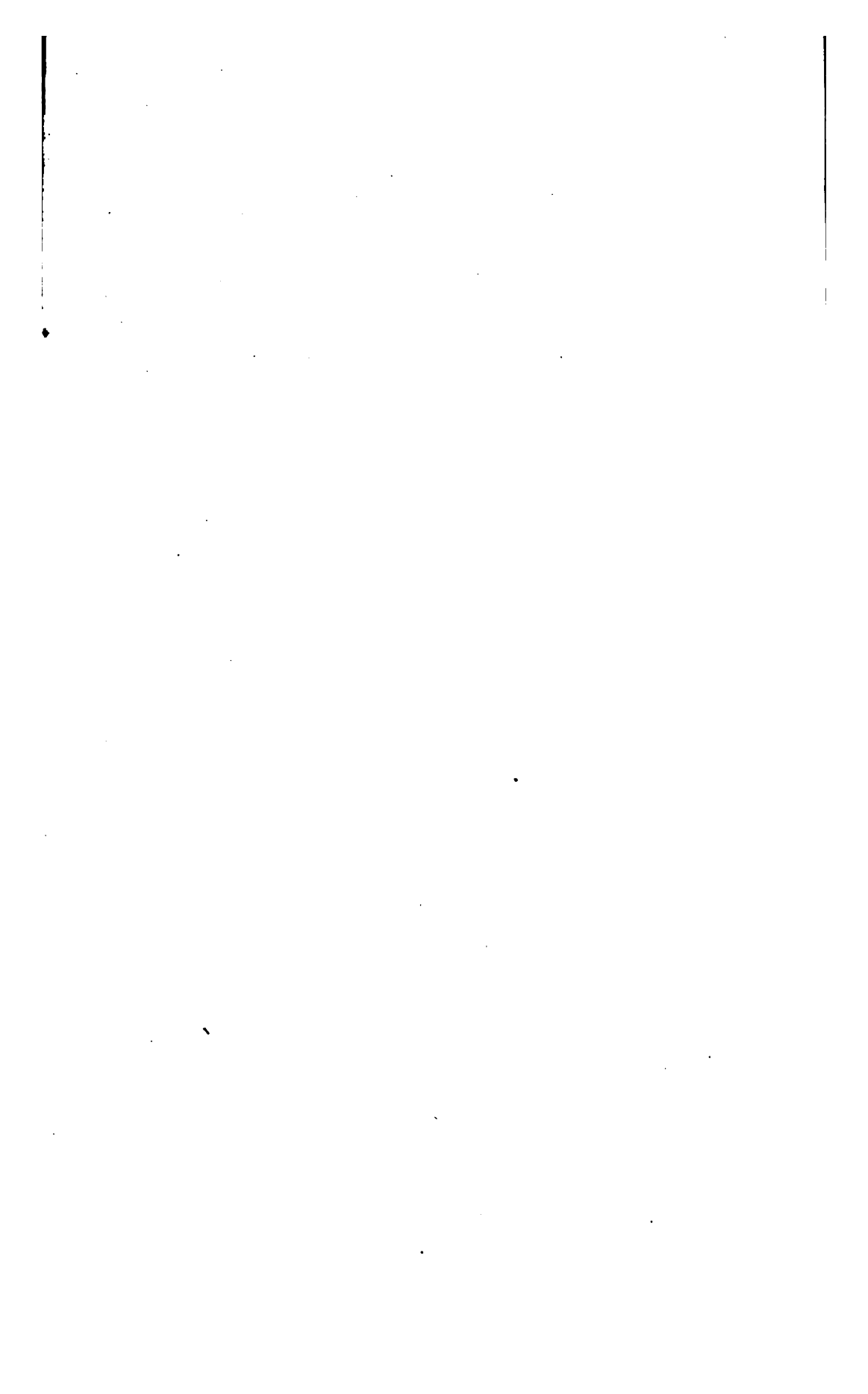
to suppress the Coromantyn rebellion on the West Coast, besides whom the Arawacks sent a fair contingent. It may be seen from the accounts of several of the Bush expeditions, how their help was absolutely necessary to capture the Bush negroes and disperse their camps, and it may be presumed that the fear of the Indians kept many of the negroes from deserting. HILLHOUSE thought the system a bad one, that it cost too much, and that it tended to demoralise the Indian, and was something like a poor rate, being a "direct bonus in favour of idleness and intemperance." Before the system was established, Indians brought the fruits of their industry to the plantations, and bartered them for what they required, but afterwards there was no longer any inducement to labour, as they got as much sugar, plantains, salt fish, tobacco, and above all, rum, as they needed, at the expense of the colony. Most of the Protectors did nothing; CHARLES EDMONSTONE was a conspicuous exception, another, THOMAS CATHREY went once into the interior and suppressed an Indian war; these were the only "Protectors" of Indians who did anything particular. As for the Post-holders they only thought of their salaries, which were hardly sufficient for common necessities, and this led to their using undue means of increasing their revenue. Living a hundred to a hundred and fifty miles from the Protector, no actual control was possible, and the Post-holder became a petty tyrant in his district, able to suppress complaints and prevent their going beyond the Post. HILLHOUSE thought the Post-holder should be a Military Officer, as it was discreditable to the colony to have such a representative to meet and discuss boundary questions with the Commandants of the neighbouring countries. The mortality at the Posts was great, while the exactions of the Post-holders drove the Indians away, the native population retiring further and further to escape them.

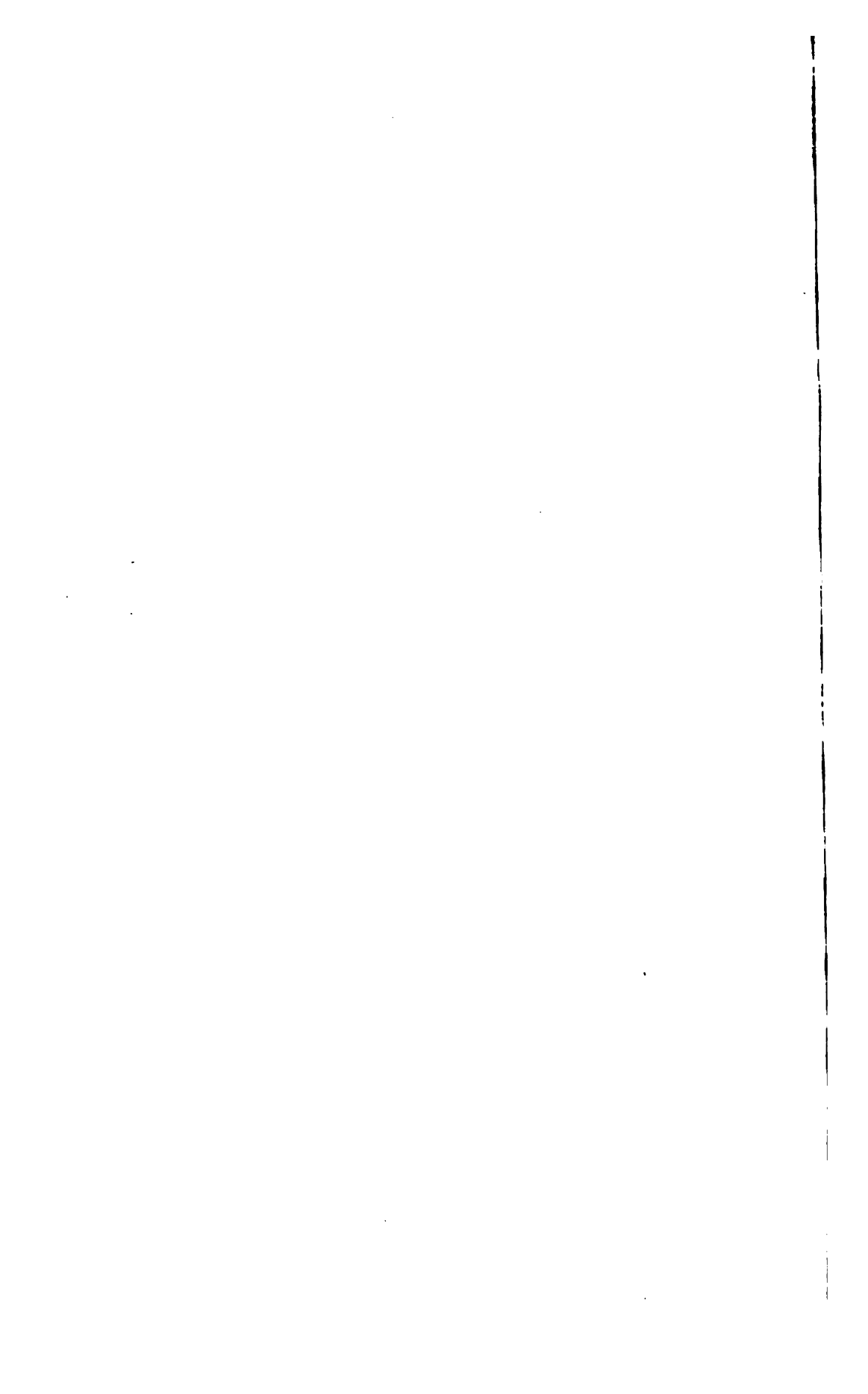
The Indian population was estimated at from fifteen to

twenty thousand, about a fourth of whom received shares of the presents, while a thousand could be raised to bear arms in the service of the colony. The Arawacks could furnish about four hundred, well acquainted with the use of fire-arms, and living up at the creeks within reasonable distance from the plantations. The Caribs had retired to the upper Essequibo and Cuyuni, where they captured other Indians as slaves and sold them to Brazil. One of their Captains, on the refusal of a Governor to accept a fine slave as a present, dashed out her brains, and declared that for the future his tribe should never give quarter.

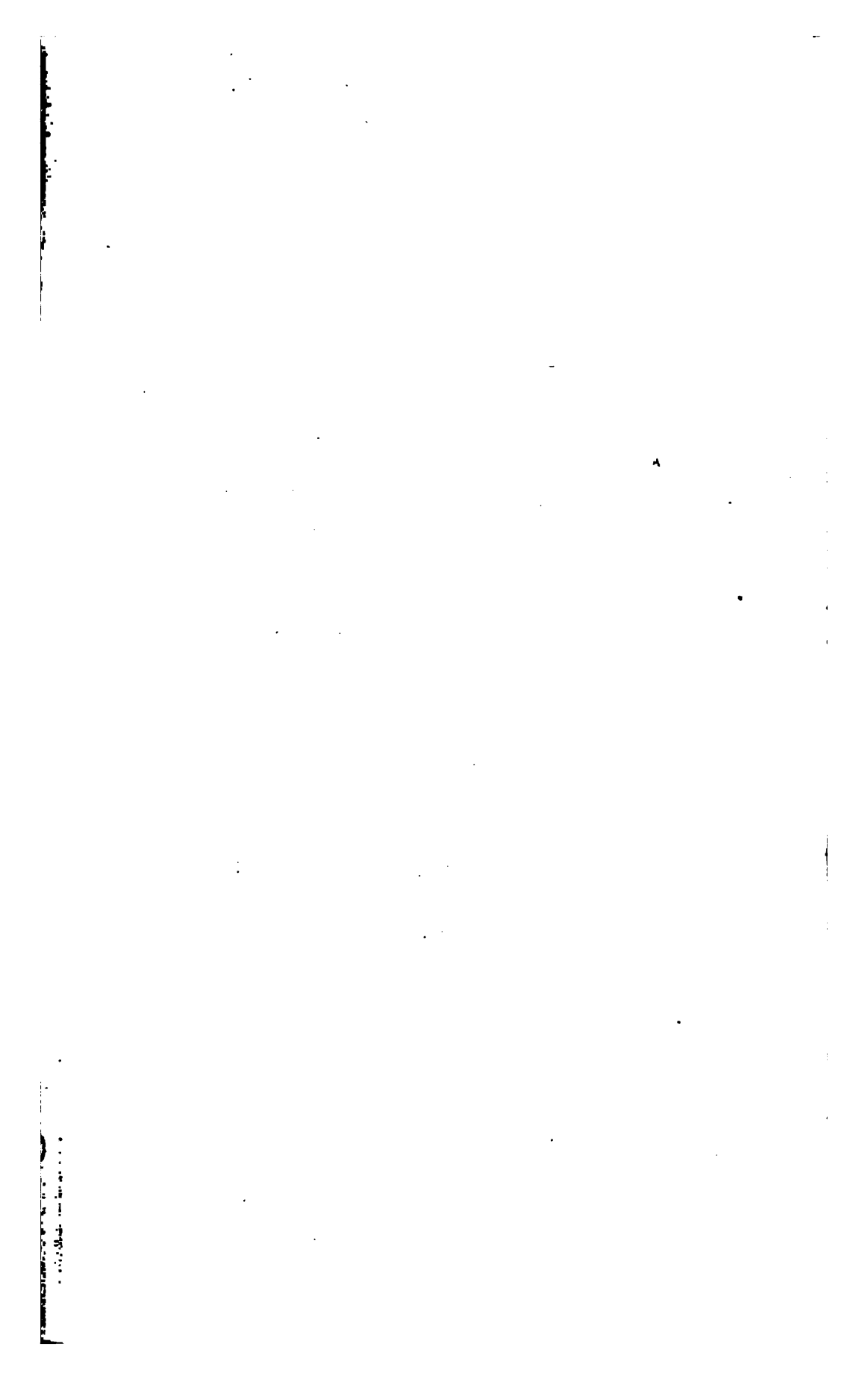
[END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.]

*l,*











3 2044 010 168 359

1011111111

